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Keats's HYPERION

By

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KEATS

HYPERION

Edited with a Critical Introduction and full Explanatory Notes

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INTRODUCTION

KEATS—THE POET

His Love of Nature.

The ancient Greeks had a romantic superstition that a handsome man who happens to see a nymph would know no rest, but be seized by a frenzied longing for her. She would haunt his memory and make him waste away as did 'La belle dame sans merci,' the knight-at-arms, in Keats' famous poem. The Greeks called him a nympholept. Even such a nympholept was Keats, but the nymph who possessed him with ecstasy was not of any river, forest or mountain, but the Spirit of Beauty in Nature and Art, in Romance and Myth, and the human form. 'Musk-rose blooms full of dewy wine', 'the murmurous haunt of flies on 'summer-eves,' 'barred clouds blooming the soft-dying day', rills shyly trilling through the mid-forest brake, song and dance and the 'sun-burnt mirth' of children—shapes of beauty like these haunted him like a passion.

His mind and eye were extraordinarily sensitive to every detail of nature's lights and shadows, of her shapes and colours and sounds, the myriad play of life and movement. The perception of them was to him an ecstasy. It is a faculty and temperament to which many of his friends bear consentaneous testimony. Here is one from Severn's reminiscences : "Nothing seemed to escape him, the song of a bird and the undernote of response from covert or hedge, the rustle of some animal, the changing of the green and brown lights and furtive shadows, the motions of the wind—just how it took certain tall flowers and plants—the wayfaring of the clouds : even the features and gestures of passing tramps, the colour of one woman's hair,

the smile on one child's face, the furtive animation below the deceptive humanity in many of the vagrants, even the hat, clothes, shoes wherever these conveyed the remotest hint as to the real self of the wearer..... Certain things affected him extremely, particularly when 'a wave was billowing through a tree', as he described the uplifting surge of air among swaying masses of chestnut or oak foliage, or when, afar off, he heard the wind coming across woodlands. 'The tide! the tide!' he would cry delightedly, and spring on to some style, or upon the low bough of a wayside tree, and watch the passage of the wind upon the meadow-grasses or young corn, not stirring till the flow of air was all around him, while an expression of rapture made his eyes gleam and his face glow till he would look 'like a wild fawn waiting for some cry from the forest depths, or like a young eagle staring with proud joy,' before taking flight."[1] And more briefly we have it from another of Keats' friends, B. R. Haydon: "He was in glory in the fields. The humming of a bee, the sight of a flower, the glitter of the sun, seemed to make his nature tremble; then his eyes flashed, his cheek glowed, his mouth quivered."[2] It was impressions like these stored in his mind that his imagination, drawing upon at will, alchemized. His mind was a picture-palace of rich and rare impressions. At a moment he could pass into that visionary world, as he does in *The Ode to the Nightingale* or *The Grecian Urn*. Though his inner ear dreamed of unheard melodies, he was even more a creator of the Beautiful than a mere dreamer thereof. To the riches he rifled from the worlds of nature, myth and man he gave the breath of a new life, and made, through the subtle power of words, his readers share them.

THE POETRY OF ESCAPE.

Keats' poetry is essentially escapist—a release from the weariness, the fever and the fret of our life. We do not read and

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1. *Life and Letters* of *Joseph Severn*, ed. William Sharp, 1892, pp. 20, 21: the passage is cited by de Sélincourt in his Introduction to his edition of Keats' Works. The passage is not all in Severn's words, being a synthesis of observations appearing in different places in Severn's diaries and reminiscences.

2. *Life of Haydon*, ed. T. Taylor, 1853, ii. 8. (Cited by de Sélincourt, Colvin and others.).

ponder it for a clearer insight into the racking issues of life. No attempt here at interpretation of the confused tangle of events, or at depicting the paradoxes of character. A lover of Shakespeare, Keats meditated and took a full view of the dark phases of life. Of despondence.

> of the inhuman dearth,
> Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
> Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways
> Made for our searching.

no other in his time knew better than Keats in his all too brief life of twenty-six years. Nor any other, better than he, the ruthless struggle of life, the grim spectacles of 'the hungry generations treading each other down'. Yet as a poet he let tragedy severely alone. It is doubtful whether, if he had lived longer, he would have realized his aspiration of making us see and prize the beauty of the world against the background of its sorrows, the heights of heroism springing from the abysses of human suffering. In *The Fall of Hyperion*, the Majestic Shadow on the heights of poetry says:

> None can usurp this height.......
> But those to whom the miseries of the world
> Are misery, and will not let them rest.

But, feeling, as he did, 'the giant agony of the world,' he could not have made us feel it. Nor had Keats Shelley's power of clothing metaphysical ideas with the magic of melody and imagery. He had no vision of an 'unseen Power' visiting this various world with an inconstant wing. He scorned to enshrine in his verse in set terms any philosophy except asserting the reality and imperishableness of Beauty as realized in imagination. The song of the nightingale heard by the imagination is eternal. In that ideal world alone can love be realized.

> She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,
> For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Unheard melodies are sweeter than heard. Beauty thus understood never passes—it is one with Truth.

"PURE POETRY."

Didacticism was never congenial to his spirit. Once indeed

in *Hyperion* Keats utters through Oceanus a Stoic ideal which was his own :

> O Folly ! for to bear all naked truths,
> And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
> That is the top of sovereignty.

In the same poem he adumbrates too his faith in a world that is struggling towards higher and higher values in art, achievement and knowledge by casting off the cramping mould of old institutions and forms in all spheres of life. But, generally, from him we have what several modern critics would call 'Pure Poetry'.

"BEAUTY IS TRUTH."

What he cared for was not the conclusions and processes of speculative philosophy or the discursive reason, but the direct enjoyment of the Beautiful—enjoyment in the poetic sense, and not that of the pleasure-seeker or sybarite. "Aching pleasure turns to poison while the bee-mouth sips", and the true delight of the soul is far away from the satisfaction of the senses which begets mere satiety and disgust. The inner possession of Loveliness is the only thing worth while in life. As he tells us in that immortal overture to *Endymion*, it still will keep.

> A bower quiet for us, and a sleep
> Full of sweet dreams and health, and quiet breathing
> Therefore, on every morrow are we wreathing
> A flowery band to bind us to the earth,
> Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth
> Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,
> Of all the unhealthy and overdarkened ways
> Made for our searching : yes, in spite of all
> Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
> From our dark spirits.

The immediate apprehension of Beauty is the prize of life. That is what he meant when he exclaimed in his letters to Bailey (of 22nd Nov. 1817) :

"O for a life of sensation rather than of Thoughts"; which must be read in its context : "What the imagination seizes as Beauty, must be Truth—whether it existed before or not....

I am more zealous in this affair because I have never been able to perceive how anything can be known for truth by consecutive reasoning—and yet it must be. Can it be that even the greatest philosopher ever arrived at truth without setting aside numerous objections? However it may be, O for a life of sensations rather than of Thoughts! It is a vision in the form of youth, 'a shadow of reality to come.'"

HIS MELANCHOLY.

Blended with this 'metaphysic of Beauty' was a deep undertone of melancholy—a melancholy born of an ever-present awareness of the evanescence of all lovely forms, of the fearful transience of human joys; born of the realization that pain and joy are inextricably intertwined—that pain resides in the very heart of joy. But this sadness is to be prized for the sake of Beauty:

> She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that must die;
> And Joy whose hand is ever at his lips
> Bidding adieu;........
> ....
> Ay, in the very temple of Delight
> Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,

And yet, Keats was never reconciled to this transience. He could not quench the soul's hunger for immortality. And hence, with a sublime lack of logic he asserted:

> Thou wast not born for death, thou immortal Bird!

The bird he apostrophized here was not the nightingale he had often listened to in rapture, but the nightingale of his imagination. It is in the life of the imagination that Keats' soul reached out for eternal types. Their secret seemed to be held by the world of art. On the Grecian vase, though the lover has not his bliss, the beloved one cannot fade—

> For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

Keats' poetic energies drew their nourishment not only from nature, but also from the springs of myth and romance:

> All lovely tales that we have heard or read:
> An endless fountain of immortal drink,
> Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

LOVE OF GREEK MYTHOLOGY.

As a boy at the Enfield school Keats had yielded to the fascination of Greek legends as presented by Spence in his *Polymetus*, or 'S. Baldwin' in his *Pantheon* or Chapman in his renderings of Homer and Hesiod. There was in Keats' genius a strain that made him penetrate through the crystallized rigidities of mythology to the delight and wonder that poetic minds in the remote dayspring of history felt when they contemplated the phenomena of Nature. He had in him something of the same mythopoeic power, even as Shelley had a great deal of it. The poetry of mythology lived again in him. It was to him a rediscovery of Nature, and a Renascence of Wonder. His vision of nature, her powers and forms was as intensely human as was the ancient Greek's; and the human forms and legends only served to bring him nearer to the mystery and elusive loveliness of Nature.

THE POETS WHO INFLUENCED HIM.

The Elizabethan and Jacobean poets through whom he imbibed that mythology were as potent as influence on the creative urge in Keats as the mythology itself. He drew much of his vital sap from Spenser, Chapman, Shakespeare, William Browne of Tavistock, Milton and Dryden; and from the eighteenth century Chatterton, Collins, Gray and other romantic poets. His maiden attempts in verse were echoes of Spenserian cadences as caught by Thomson in the *Castle of Indolence*, an ode to Hope cast in "the square-toed manner of eighteenth century didactic verse", and another to Apollo in the style of Gray.

Most of the poems in his first volume of poems (published in 1817) were experiments either in the Italian sonnet fo octave and sestet, or in the octosyllabic and decasyllabic couplet. Predominant in these poems is the influence of Spenser and Chapman, Browne and Chamberlayne. "These writers", in the words of Dr. Oliver Elton, "came to Keats, not only as revelations of a lovely dream-world full of chivalrous shapes and tapestried with scenes from enchanted forests, but also as the very transmitters and voices of the antique. From them he learnt tales like those of Endymion, and Glaucus, and Syrinx and Pan, and Hyacinthus. In this mixed, surcharged form the

antique came to him, with the profusion, the heady perfume, the formlessness of nature herself, as of a bean-field over which bees are murmuring. Some of the most heroic tales of the world, moreover came to him through Chapman's *Homer*, with its style that is so mainly and magnificent, but is also so easily false—false every five minutes! The poets were to lead him out of this bewildering enchanted ground—*Paradise Lost*, and Shakespkeare, and Dryden too; but meantime the poets had led him into it, and it is no wonder that his style faltered between beauty and inefficiency, and that his inefficient reviewers, who did not even know where he got his style, were blind to its beauty." In these poems Keats is far from having attained that chastened brilliance, clearly defined imagery and suggestiveness of expression that marks his great odes; in their place we have a foretaste of the profusion of vague imagery and the Asiatic exuberance of *Endymion*, but interwoven with lines and phrases of singular grace and felicity.

HIS POETIC GROWTH

Endymion, with more than five thousand lines in the heroic couplet, which, with their honeyed diction and poppied enchantment, are far from heroic, aims at presenting the Greek myth as an allegory shadowing forth the search of the poetic soul for ideal beauty as symbolized by the Moon-Goddess the allegory being lost in pointless digression and the bewildering maze of the narrative. *Isabella*, *The Eve of St. Agnes*, *Lamia* and *The Eve of St. Mark* reveal the growth of the poet's power to harmonize the elements of atmosphere, description and narrative into artistic unity—economy of style replacing the earlier luxuriance. *The Eve of St. Agnes* shows Keats at the height of his power as a narrative poet, with full command over the effects of suspense and the conduct of the Spenserian stanza as a vehicle of packed felicities of description. With each stanza the story gets a move on through the well-sustained atmosphere of enchantment and wonder. But it is in the Ode—*Ode to Psyche*, *To Autumn*, *On a Grecian Urn*, *To a Nightingale*, *Ode to Indolence* and *Ode on Melancholy*—that we reach the high-water mark of Keats' genius. We have in them the thrice-refined gold of a poet's transfigured memories running molten and iridescent into well-

designed patterns. They have the unity of poetic symphonies. In respect of metrical form they vary from one another; and all, except the *Ode to Indolence*, vary from rhyme scheme from stanza to stanza. One wonders whether any poet has surpassed Keats in "the richly meditative Ode". "It is here", says Professor de Sélincourt, "that his poetry surprises with a fine excess, yet never cloys with exaggeration, that all the different elements that moulded or inspired his genius are completely harmonized in the imaginative expression of his present mood.... In the Odes he has no master and their indefinable beauty is so direct and so distinctive an effluence of his soul that he can have no disciple." Keats might be said to have bequeathed his Testament of Beauty to several; but to none to finer purpose than the poet who made it his theme for a *magnum opus*—Robert Bridges. Bridges' estimate of the Odes is none too exaggerated; "Had Keats left us only his Odes, his rank among the poets would not be lower than it is, for they have stood apart in literature, at least the six most famous of them."

Keats was nothing if not an experimenter. During the very period he wrote the tales and odes he harked back to a classical theme that had been haunting him between whiles even when he was busy with *Endymion*—the story of 'the overthrow of the old elemental Greek Gods by a new Olympian hierarchy'. The poem, *Hyperion*, was to be in quite a different style from that of *Endymion*, something in the manner of Milton—stately in style with the reticences of great art. As the theme developed Keats found himself in a blind alley, working in a mode alien to his genius. *Hyperion*, thus, is a challenging essay, a grand half-success like a pylon or *gopura* without a temple.

His Tireless Quest.

The poetry of Keats is the efflorescence of an all too brief period of five years (1815-1820), preceding an age when the flowering time of most poets begins. Born amidst the most unpropitious environments of London, racked by a wasting passion in league with the tightening grip of a fatal hereditary disease, repressed by hostile criticism, Keats heroically pursued his solitary path of self-expression, always seeking to transcend himself, and left behind him work that places him in the very front rank of

English poets. A divine dissatisfaction goaded him on. He was like the chambered nautilus of the poet, ever seeking for larger mansions for his genius. A veritable Crœsus with an incalculable treasury of poetic impressions, Keats had to solve the problem of how to discipline them into an ordered beauty of form. He held that poetry must be spontaneous; every student of his knows his famous dictum: "Unless poetry come like leaves to the tree it had better not come at all". But some of his most magical phrases did not come wooing him. No one studied and revised his phrases more strenuously than Keats. His happiest strokes often illustrate Ben Jonson's canon:

That he
Who casts to write a living line, must sweat,
(Such as thine are) and strike the second heat
Upon the Muses' anvil.

and Dante's: "Poetry and the language proper for it are an elaborate and painful toil."

HIS LIFE

Heredity and environment—the key-words of the biologist—seek in vain to explain any strand of Keats' genius; his poetry was an embodied challenge to these normally inexorable factors and to circumstance. But he was the nurseling of a great age in literature. In the words of Sir Sidney Colvin, "he was born at an hour when the gradually re-awakened genius of poetry, was ready to offer new forms of spiritual sustenance, and a range of emotions both widened and deepened, to a generation as yet only half prepared to receive them. The poet, John Keats, was born in 1795, in "the dull and middling walk of London city life"—in Finsbury Pavement—the eldest child of Thomas Keats, a livery-stable keeper. At intervals of two years followed three brothers and a sister—the forth child dying in infancy. The parents, though ambitious to send their boys to Harrow, were compelled by straitened means to send them to a private school at Enfield. Shortly after Keats had been put to school his father died, and the family shifted to Edmonton where the children's grandmother had a house. His schooldays

at Enfield brought him an imponderable benefit in the shape of a friendship which had a far-reaching effect on the development of his mind. The friend was none other than the son of the headmaster. Charles Cowden Clarke, who was an ardent lover of books and music, with an intellectual enthusiasm that was enfectious. He is the only authentic source of what we know of Keats' days at school. "Upon one occasion", Cowden Clarke tells us in his Recollections of Writers, "when an usher, on account of some impertinent behaviour, had boxed his brother Tom's ears, John rushed up, put himself into the received posture of offence, and it was said, struck the usher—who could, so to say, have put him in his pocket. His passion at times was almost ungovernable; and his brother George, being considerably the taller and stronger, used frequently to hold him down by main force, laughing when John was 'in one of his moods', and was endeavouring to beat him. It was all, however, a wisp-of-straw conflagration; for he had an intensely tender affection for his brothers, and proved it upon the most trying occasions. He was not merely the favourite of all, like a pet prize-fighter, for his terrier-courage; but his high-mindedness, his utter unconsciousness of a mean motive, his placability, his generosity, wrought so general a feeling in his behalf, that I never heard a word of disapproval from any one, superior or equal, who had known him". From the same authority we learn of Keats' voracious reading at school, and of the books that formed his choice pabulum, among which he mentions Tooke's *Pantheon*, Lemprières *Classical Dictionary* ('which he appeared to learn') and Spence's *Polymetis*.

When Keats was fifteen his mother succumbed to consumption. During her illness he would sit up whole nights with her, 'would suffer nobody to give her medicine, or even cook her food, but himself, and read novels to her in her intervals of ease'. A few months later, one of the two guardians to whom the care of the children had been entrusted by the grandmother, taking up all the responsibilities of the trust, bound him apprentice for five years to a surgeon at Edmonton. During this period he would on free evenings repair to Enfield 'to see Cowden Clarke and bring away or return borrowed books'. To him he owed his introduction to Spenser, Milton, and the romantic

poets of the eighteenth century. Memorable was the evening in which he listened to the reading of Spenser's *Epithalamion*, and carried home the borrowed *Farie Queene* as a prize.

Like the Prince Charming of the fairy tale the *Faerie Queene* awakened the Sleeping Beauty of Poetry in Keats. The *Lyrical Ballads* of Coleridge and Wordsworth, Scott's romantic, lays Byron's *Childe Harold* and · Wordsworth's *Excursion* ('with which almost from the first Keats was profoundly impressed), and other volumes that appeared at this time as the first fruits of the Romantic Revival in its heyday, did not a little to quicken his thought and imagination. Besides, there was nature. "In his habitual afternoon and evening strolls to Enfield and back," says Sidney Colvin, "a delighted sense of the myriad activities of nature's life in wood and field and brook and croft and hedgerow began to possess Keats' mind, and to blend with the beautiful images that already peopled it from his readings in Greek mythology and to be enhanced into a strange super-natural thrill by the recurring magic of moonlight." Keats' first shy attempts at writing verse date from his eighteenth year. A few weeks before his twentieth birthday Keats disengaged himself from his indenture to the surgeon at Edmonton and went to live in London as a student at the hospitals of St. Thomas and Guy's.

In July 1816 Keats presented himself for examination before the Court of Apothecaries and obtained the license to practise. But the inner call to poetry becoming insistent, early in the spring of 1817 he gave up the life of a medical student; in March was published his first volume of poetry—the principal pieces in the volume being *Sleep and Poetry* and *I Stood Tiptoe Upon a Little Hill*. 'My last operation', he once told a friend 'was the opening of a man's temporal artery. I did it with the utmost nicety, but reflecting on what passed through my mind at the time, my dexteriy seemed a miracle, and I never took up the lancet again'. The autumn of 1816 witnessed Keats' first introduction to Chapman's translation of Homer, to which literary event in his life we owe one of his triumphs in the sonnet form.

To this time belong two friendships of consequence—one with Leigh Hunt, and the other with the painter, B. R. Haydon.

In the social and intellectual atmosphere of Hunt's home at Hampstead, Keats found the needed stimulus for literary life. But his influence was not an unmingled good. Keats yielded to Hunt's vice of imaginative profusion and a jaunty looseness of style and diction. Among the acquaintances he made at Hunt's home there were Hoarace Smith, Shelley, and John Hamilton Reynolds. Shelley showed Keats a warmth of regard and appreciation which failed to evoke adequate response, perhaps because Keats was conscious that the cast of his imagination was different from Shelley's. Haydon, the middling painter of indomitable egoism, expounded to Keats the glories of the Parthenon sculptures obtained from the Parthenon by Lord Elgin and hence called the Elgin marbles.

Keats first volume having no sale, a certain coldness developed between the publishers and Keats' brothers. A few weeks after the publication of the 'Poems', Keats, following the advice of his brothers and Haydon—the latter had pointed out how necessary it was that he should be alone to improve himself,—started without companions for the Isle of Wight (15 April, 1817). After some days of sleeplessness at Shanklin he left for Margate where he was joined by his brother Tom. After a few weeks in Canterbury all the three brothers made a common home at Hampstead. Here Keats soon made fast friends with two young men of a literary turn of mind—Charles Wentworth Dilke and Charles Armitage Brown who had built and were occupying together a block of two houses called Westworth Place. Through Haydon he became acquainted with Wordsworth for whose poetry he had an early admiration. But the man Wordsworth failed to evoke the same enthusiasm. George Keats deciding now on marriage and emigration to America, Keats had to take his place in nursing Tom at Teignmouth. While at Teignmouth, between the middle of March and middle of May, 1818, he wrote *Isabella*, and studied the style and verse of *Paradise Lost*, by way of disciplining his art for a classical poem on the subject of *Hyperion*. He then returned with Tom to Hampstead. Immediately afterwards George and his wife Georgiana started for Liverpool, thence to embark. John Keats and Brown, who had planned a summer walking tour in the English lakes and Scotland, accompanied them as far as Lan-

caster on their way. The only book Keats took with him for reading was the miniature three-volume edition of Cary's *Dante*. After a visit to the English lakes they walked to Carlisle, whence they took coach to Dumfries where they visited the tomb of Burns. Then they went to Kirkudbrightshire, the country of Meg Merrilies (of Scott's (*Guy Mannering*). In its " its scenery at once wild and soft, its embosomed inlets and rocky tufted headlands, its high craggy moors towering inland, and its backward views over the glimmering Solway to the the Cumberland fells or the hazier hills of Man, they began to enjoy themselves to the full. From Kirkudbrightshire they crossed over to Ireland. On their return they journeyed through Burn's country to the heart of the Highlands. From Oban they travelled by water to Staffa and Iona. Keats was greatly impressed by the monastic ruins of Iona and the basaltic columns of Fingal's Cave, a magnificent piece of nature's architeture, which for " solemnity and grandeur ", he said, " surpassed the finest cathedral ". The exertion and exposure undergone on his Scottish tour, particularly the walk of thirty-seven miles across the Isle of Mull, broke his health. A slight sore throat prepared the ground for consumption which had been in the family. The ascent and descent of Ben Nevis brought on fever, and the doctor who regarded his condition as seriously threatening ordered his immediate return home. Accordingly, from Cromarty he took passage at once for London.

During his absence Tom's health had been fast deteriorating. For the next three months and a half Keats assiduously watched by his death-bed. In September he began to write *Hyperion* as a relief from the long nightmare vigils by the bedside. He yielded at this time to a delirious passion for Fanny Brawne, ' a lively fair-haired girl of seventeen, the eldest daughter of a widow lady who had rented Brown's house at Hampstead during its owner's summer-tour in Scotland, and was living in Downshire Street close by.' On 1 December, 1818 Tom Keats died. In the first half of January he was mainly busy with *Hyperion*.

The dark days of anxious tendance were rendered darker still by the attacks of the *Blackwood's Magazine* and *The Quarterly Review* who clapperclawed him with spiteful virulence. Though he bore it with a dignified temper, the injury done to his material

prospects contributed subsequently to sharpen the agony of a life already racked by a tormenting passion, disease and ill-fortune. In defiance of it all he wrote his famous odes, *The Eve of St. Agnes, The Eve of St. Mark,* and *La Belle Dame Sans Merci.*

A word must be said of that tormenting passion. "It is clear," writes Sidney Colvin, "that though certainly high-spirited, inexperienced and self-confident, she was kind and in essentials constant to her lover, and patient and unresentful under his occasional wild out-bursts of jealousy and suspicion.... She had no objection to indulge to the full the pleasures of her age and the admiration of other men.... The gibes of the reviewers, little as they might touch his inner self, came to teach him the harshness and carelessness of the world's judgments, and the precariousness of his practical hopes from literature. Now were to be added the pangs of love,—love requited indeed, but having no near or sure prospect of fruition : and even love disdained might have made him suffer less. The passion took him as it often takes consumptives, in its fiercest form : Love the limb-loosener, the bitter-sweet torment, the wild-beast there is no withstanding, never harried a more helpless victim." As an antidote against the fever of love-sickness and monetary difficulties which were due to his generosity to friends like Haydon, he devoted some days (from the middle of August to the second week of October, 1819) amidst 'the elm-shadowed meadow-walks' in the old cathedral city of Winchester to *Lamia,* the concluding scenes of *Otho the Great,* an historical play he had begun in collaboration with Brown, and the opening scenes of *King Stephen.* He then re-wrote *Hyperion,* to make it more an expression of his own spirit, and less Miltonic, giving it the form of a vision, with the title, *The Fall of Hyperion*—a poem in which he enshrined his ideal of poetry. The poetic spirit must rise above the imaginative picture of lovely sensations and images, and make itself a potent instrument for the alleviation of human misery through the growth of knowledge and self-effacement.

On the third of February (1820), while travelling from London to Hampstead, on the top of an open stage coach, in weather which was sleaty and bitter-cold, he caught a chill that brought on hæmorrhage which was an unmistakable symptom of consump-

tion. "At eleven o' clock," Brown tells us, "he came into the house in a state that looked like fierce intoxication. Such a state in him, I know, was impossible; it therefore was the more fearful. I asked hurriedly, 'What is the matter? You are fevered?' 'Yes, yes," he answered, 'I was on the outside of the stage this bitter day till I was severely chilled,—but now I don't feel it. Fevered!—of course, a little.' He mildly and instantly yielded, a property in his nature towards any friend, to my request that he should go to bed. I entered his chamber as he leapt into bed. On entering the cold sheets, before his head was on the pillow, he slightly coughed, and I heard him say,—'that is blood from my mouth.' I went towards him; he was examining a single drop of blood upon the sheet. 'Bring me the candle, Brown, and let me see this blood.' After regarding it steadfastly, he looked up in my face, with a calmness of countenance that I can never forget, and said,—'I know the colour of that blood; it is arterial blood;—I cannot be deceived in that colour,—that drop of blood is my death-warrant; I must die.' I ran for a surgeon; my friend was bled; and at five in the morning, I left him after he had been some time in a quiet sleep."

Under this 'death-warrant' Keats lingered on for twelve months longer. He described it as a posthumous existence, as a life in death. About the middle of August he learnt from his doctors that his only chance of recovery lay in a winter in Italy. After four weeks in 'comparative respite from suffering and distress under the eye and tendance of his beloved,' he embarked for Italy under the care of Severn. Though the first five weeks in Rome brought a temporary alleviation of his sufferings, there came a fearful relapse, in the shape of repeated hæmorrhage. His one anxiety in those days was about Severn's health, prospects and peace of mind. "He explained to me," says Severn, whom Keats, had, with a view to putting an end to his misery, begged with agonies of entreaty for laudanum, "the exact procedure of his gradual dissolution, enumerated by deprivations and toils, and dwelt upon the danger to my life and certainly to my fortune of my continued attendance on him." A few days before the end came he expressed a desire to be buried near the Pyramid of Caius Cestius, saying that he seemed already to feel the

flowers growing over him : he gave Severn for his epitaph the words partly taken from a phrase in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*—'Here lies one whose name was writ in water.' On the 23rd of February (1821) he peacefully sank into death in the arms of severn, after uttering the words : "Severn—I—lift me up—I am dying—I shall die easy don't be frightened—be firm, and thank God it has come."

One of the warmest of friends whose one vice was, as his friend, Brown said, lending to his friends in need more than he could afford, endowed with compassion towards all suffering creatures—a compassion that once made him fight a butcher for harassing a cat—he struggled against emotions that threatened the exalted ideal in him, which may well be the ideal of us all : "I find earlier days are gone by—I find that I can have no enjoyment in the world but continual drinking of knowledge. I find there is no worthy pursuit but the idea of doing some good to the world. Some do it with their society—some with their wit—some with their benevolence—some with a sort of power of conferring pleasure and good humour on all they meet—and in a thousand ways, all dutiful to the command of great Nature—there is but one way for me. The road lies through application, study and thought. I will pursue it."

HYPERION

THE POET'S FASCINATION FOR GREEK MYTHOLOGY

Keats knew no Greek, and his classical attainments extended no further than the *Aeneid* ; and yet it is sober truth to say, that the contemplation of the ancient myths filled him with the same creative rapture as they did the Greek in the twilight of history when he clothed the wonders of Natural phenomena with human forms and character and made them the dramatis personæ on a cosmic stage. Romantic in every fibre of his being, Keats was also in a sense what Shelley called him—'a Greek of Greeks.' In one of his early poems, *I Stood Tiptoe*, by a sort of *empathy* he becomes for the moment the name-

less poets of Hellas's imaginative dawn, those who 'first told the tales of Cupid and Psyche, of Narcissus and Echo, of Cynthia and Endymion—which last evokes the yearning :

> O for the words of honey, that I might
> Tell but one wonder of thy bridal night.

Not in a 'creed outworn' was Keats suckled, but in one that throbbed with the life-blood of his own mind.

"He realized instinctively," as Dr. de Sélincourt says, "the spirit in which the legends had taken their rise, and by that same artistic sense which led the Greek to incarnate in human form the spirit recognised by his religion in the beauty and the power about him, Keats made it his own." To Keats a mythological simile was also in very spirit, a simile from nature ; while the phenomena of nature stood for him as symbols of human emotions. The flower lifting its head at Apollo's touch was to him symbolical of the revival of drooping hearts and withered frames through the sovereign power of Beauty and Love. Cynthia, described in *Endymion* as pale-cheeked, shedding a wan loveliness on 'Neptune's blue'—with "a stress of love-spangles"

> Dancing upon the waves, as if to please
> The curly foam with amorous influence

is something more than the shimmer of pale moonlight on the sea : it images the power of love on the dusky face of life ; and "the yearning of human passion"[1]. It is the same mythologizing imagination that makes the poet in his ode *To Autumn* incarnate the spirit of autumn in 'the figures of the reaper, the gleaner, the maiden at the cider-press.' We see the suffusion of nature with human emotion in his last great sonnet of his, wherein he speaks of the star in lone splendour watching with eternal lids apart

> Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite
> The moving waters at their priest-like task
> Of pure ablution round's earth's human shores,

Keats contemplated the powers of Nature with something akin to the unsophisticated imagination of the Aryan mind standing

1. *Endymion*, iii. 74-96 ; and de Sélincourt, lxv.

at gaze before her inexhausitble witchery of loveliness, her endless surprises of mood.

But, if in a sense he was a Greek, he was by study and instinct the foster-child of Elizabethan poets, whose spirit had a fresh lease of life in him. As with Spenser and his followers, so with Keats myth and romance were alive with allegoric significance. Thus the tale of Endymion became in his hands a parable of the indissoluble union of Love and Beauty, and of "the adventures of the poetic soul after full communion with the spirit of essential beauty."

These facts must bear closely on our appraisement of *Hyperion.*

GESTATION OF THE THEME

Stray references in *Endymion* and the Preface to that poem justify the inference that the subject of *Hyperion*, namely, the overthrow of the Titans by the brighter gods of Olympus, was even then present in Keats' mind as the possible theme of a companion poem. The line in *Endymion* iv, 774 (written in November, 1817) :

> Thy lute-voic'd brother will I sing ere long

and the quaint oaths by 'Titan's foe' (943) and

> By old Saturnus' forelock, by his head
> Shook with eternal palsy (956-7)

witness the fact that the story of *Hyperion was* already struggling into shape. When in September Keats wrote to Haydon : "I have a new romance in my eye for next summer," obviously it was this new poem he was thinking of. We have clearer promise of it in the *Preface to Endymion* :

"I hope I have not in too late a day touched the beautiful mythology of Greece, and dulled its brightness : for I wish to try once more, before I bid it farewell." He commenced the poem by way of seeking relief from the oppressive hours of attendance on his dying brother—as an escape from the gadfly of his own thoughts. He had already, it would seem, decided that the poem was to be an epic. For his Scottish tour the only book he took

with him was Cary's translation of Dante, the style of which is frequently reminiscent of Milton. During his stay in Teignmouth in the spring of 1818 he had been studying *Paradise Lost* with a zest he had never brought to it before—'penetrating with the grasp and swiftness of genius, as his marginal criticisms show, into the very essence of its power and beauty.' Under the spell of Milton he felt the urge to attempt an epic theme in an epic style. Apart from parallelisms of situation between *Paradise Lost* and *Hyperion*, there are in the latter frequent reminiscences of Miltonic diction and syntax. We hear Keats ventriloquizing in the voice of Milton ; while in the third book he tires of it, in between the pauses of even the first two books we can catch the linnet trills of Keats himself. It is an experiment and an exercise, a literary *tour de force*—to be judged as such.

In *Endymion* Keats had trailed the reader through an endless labyrinth of dreaming narrative and cloying description of amorous ardours. Its languorous beauties seem to smother us under roses. In *Hyperion* he decides to discard them, and adopts a style of bracing economy and concinnity. No loading here of 'every rift with ore.' In place of irrelevant episodes and phantom journeyings through subterranean corridors and submarine palaces through which we were led such a wild-goose chase in *Endymion* we have here a narrative that stands out in classically pure and simple outline ; and we have scenes and figures standing out sculptural relief. *Hyperion* presents a Greek theme in the Greek manner, with Miltonic echoes—nevertheless a new and original creation, with merits and drawbacks all its own. In *Hyperion*, as in *Endymion*, a symbolic meaning enters to quicken an ancient myth to new life. Before we consider that meaning we must glance at the theme itself.

THE THEME

In Book I we see Saturn, king of the primeval gods or Titans lying prone and paralysed in a deep dell, having been struck down from his throne by his son Jupiter with the very thunderbolt he has wrenched from his father. Thea, the wife of the sun-god Hyperion, beholding his plight, sinks down at his feet

weeping. Shivering and faltering, he asks her as to what has happened to that sovereign power which once reigned as Saturn —an 'influence benign' over creation. In agony he cries:

> "Cannot I form? Cannot I fashion forth
> Another world, another universe,
> To overbear and crumble this to nought?
> Where is another chaos? Where?"

The words kindling a glow of hope, she leads him to the den where the other Titans lay stricken, either chained in torture or imprisoned in a stifling air. But among the mighty brood of Titans there was one who still kept his sovereignty—none other than Hyperion, who still throned on his orb snuffed the incense mounting up from the world of man.

But even he reads the portents of the coming catastrophe. While Saturn and Thea are on their way to the murky defile where the Titans lie prostrate Hyperion enters his palace and thunders out his defiance of rebel Jove. He "would advance his terrible right arm, scare that infant thunderer and bid old Saturn take his throne again." Six hours before the dawn he would commence the day, but even a god cannot lawlessly disturb the order of Nature. As he sinks on his couch, grief-stricken at the humiliation, his mother, Cœlus, (the Heavens) counsels him the way of wisdom. It was a pity he had allowed himself to be torn by rival passions, like frail man: "Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay and fall." Nevertheless, she says: 'do not be ruled by events, anticipate and seek to control them before they become too formidable':

> Be thou therefore in the van
> Of circumstance; yea, seize the arrow's barb
> Before the tense string murmur

Book II, opens with the description of representative Titans in their prostration and despair holding council; presently we come to its main theme, the speeches of Oceanus and Clymene (his daughter) and by way of counterblast to these, the clarion-call of Enceladus pronouncing in favour of open war against the new upstart powers—all by way of reply to Saturn's demand for counsel: "Tell me, all ye brethren Gods, How we can war, how engine our great wrath?" Oceanus explains the significance of

the change that has come on the Titans. They have fallen by course of Nature's law not by force of thunder or of Jove. Saturn himself was but an episode in an evolution of Heaven and Earth to fairer and fairer states. He was neither the beginning, nor the end. They, the fallen gods, had succeeded to an elder world of Chaos and parental Darkness. Even so they must perforce be succeeded by powers fairer far than they. Wisdom lies in facing all naked truths unblenched—in calmly 'envisaging circumstance.' Clymene reinforces the argument with her own experience, how she had to throw away the shell from which she used to evoke her melodies, when Apollo's enchanting strains fell upon her ears. Enceladus follows with his Moloch-like wrath and defiance, and his words put new hope into some of his listeners, including dejected Hyperion, who shout forth Saturn's name calling him to action.

In Book III we see Mnemosyne (the goddess of Memory) rallying Apollo, Hyperion's successor, from a benumbing dejection and a strange forgetfulness. He feels the travail of latent powers, far brighter, and far more benignant than Hyperion and the elder gods had known. But he cannot understand the why and wherefore of that travail and he asks Mnemosyne to help him to that new consciousness. We see him as he undergoes the struggle and the 'sea-change'

> Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events, rebellions
> Majesties, sovereign voices, agonies,
> Creations and destroyings, all at once
> Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,
> And deify me, as if some blithe wine
> Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,
> And so become immortal.

The poem breaks off abruptly as Apollo emerges resplendent from the throes of his agony.

"Hyperion begins *in medii rebus*.[1] Saturn and Oceanus are already deposed, many of their colleagues (most of them it may be remarked, Giants, not Titans, who, therefore, took part in

1. In the middle of the story.

the later war and not properly speaking in the Titanomachia at all) are already chained in torture (ii. 18); the kingdom of Hyperion himself, though as yet unassailed, is filled with portents of its coming doom."

SYMBOLIC MEANING

Whatever its merits as an epic fragment, *Hyperion* holds our interest from first to last as a piece of verse narrative and description in the grand style. Its inner meaning, though vital to the appreciation of the poem, does not ask for first preference in our interest. The allegory is implicit in the story—rather, story and allegory are inseparably fused, though there is not much of a story. "All allegory bites—bites into the nobler vitals of poetry," says Professor Garrod. But tucked up, in the background, it may not bite, but caress with an intriguing charm. Great works of art may *suggest* a secondary meaning without harming themselves. The allegorical meaning behind *Hyperion* does not derogate from its value, but it shatters the story.

"The Revolutionary Idea" was then in the air. Shelley and Byron were possessed by it. Shelley was possessed by the idea of emancipating the world from the thraldom of custom, priest-craft, superstition and tyranny in all spheres. His Prometheus is the Great Deliverer and *Prometheus Unbound* rings from first to last with the note of Freedom and what we should now call 'A New World Order'. It closes with the memorable vision:

> Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,
> Whose nature is its divine control,
> Where all things flow to all, as rivers to the sea:
> Familiar acts are beautiful through love;
> Labour and pain, and grief, in life's green grove
> Sport like tame beasts, none knew how gentle they
> could be!
> His will, with all mean passions, bad delights,
> And selfish cares, its trembling satellites,
> A spirit ill to guide, but mighty to obey,
> Is a tempest-winged ship whose helm
> Love rules.

The old order must be changed so that the new may emerge. Though Keats was not dedicated to the Idea as Shelley was, he nursed it deep in his heart. The overthrow of Saturn by Jove, of Hyperion by Apollo, meant to him the disappearance from human societies of crude forms of worship animated by fear of the brute powers of Nature, and the awakening of man to nobler ideas of ethics and arts. Clymene throws away her primitive shell, and listens to the strains of Apollo's lyre. Perhaps, on the face of it, it suggested to Keats the passing away of the narrow reason of the Neo-Classical age and the advent of Romanticism. But, at bottom, it shadowed forth man's advance towards finer conceptions of Beauty in the realm of Art. The birth-anguish of Apollo, with which the poem closes, symbolizes the secret of genuine, sovereign poetic power. A poet becomes great only if he has learnt to view the pain and sorrow of others as his own. His small self must die, and gain new life in the life of the world. Like Apollo he must "die into life." He is expected to have contemplated and faced squarely

> the gloomy days
> Of all the unhealthy and o'erdarkened ways
> Made for our searching :[1]

As Keats says in *The Fall of Hyperion*, "none can usurp his height"—that is, the great poet's—

> But those to whom the miseries of the world
> Are misery, and will not let them rest.

Even Apollo must undergo a 'fire-baptism' of the spirit, before he can be truly and fully himself. So must every poet worthy of the name. Hyperion might live in his Empyrean Palace of Art, "snuffiing the incense, teeming up From man to sun's God,"—but not Apollo with his quivering compassion. The contrast between Hyperion and Apollo, has been interpreted as the contrast between the visionary and the humanitarian.

Hyperion is the parable of what Carlyle would call the "Phoenix-birth" of Society ; of the disintegration of effete

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1. See exordium to *Endymion*.

forms, institutions and political machinery, under the impact of forces that seek to take society on to a fresh stage of progress. The poet puts this central idea of the poem into the mouth of Oceanus :

> And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth
> In form and shape compact and beautiful,
> In will, in action free, companionship,
> And thousand other signs of purer life ;
> So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
> A power more strong in beauty, born of us
> And fated to excel us, as we pass
> In glory that old Darkness.

Had Keats heard of 'Emergent Evolution' he could not have made the lines more closely fit in with that conception of Lloyd Morgan's.[1]

We may re-state the symbolic significance in Bridges' words: "There is a self-destructive progress in nature towards good, and that beauty, and not force, is the law of this flux or change. It seems also probable that Keats intended to make Hyperion and Mnemosyne instruct Apollo, and thus to show Light and Song passing into union and perfection out of elemental chaos and crudeness. However this may be, Oceanus bids Saturn take comfort in his dethronement, for he says,

> To bear all naked truths,
> And to envisage circumstance, all calm
> That is the top of sovereignty."

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1. The constructive philosophy of emergent evolution implies (i) "that there is an increasing complexity in integral systems as new kinds of relatedness are successively supervenient ; (ii) that reality is, in this sense, in process of development ; (iii) that there is an ascending scale of what we may speak of richness in reality ; and (iv) that the richest reality that we know lies at the apex of the pyramid of emergent evolution up to date." *Emergent Evolution*, 203. "There is increasing richness in stuff and in substance throughout the stages of evolutionary advance ; there is redirection of the course of events at each level ; this redirection is so marked at certain critical turning points as to present 'the apparent paradox' that the emergently new is incompatible in 'substance' with the previous course of events before the turning point was reached" *Ibid.*, 207.

AN EPIC FRAGMENT?

Hyperion, then, is a fragment of heroic narrative, dealing with a mythological theme and embodying an allegorical significance. The sustained elevation of style invests it with an epic quality. The gigantic figures that spring up before our field of vision like spectres of Brocken are on the scale of nature's vast stage, and suggest an epic stateliness. How far do these elements entitle us to call the poem an epic fragment? Has it the essential features of an epic poem? How do we recognize an epic? We may define it with Macneile Dixon as "a narrative poem, organic in structure dealing with great actions and great characters, in a style commensurate with the lordliness of its theme, which tends to idealize these characters and actions, and to sustain and embellish its subject by means of episode and amplification." The Epic has a lordly style because it has a lordly theme—"great action" with an organic structure, that is, action which, as Aristotle said, should be *single*, *great* and *complete*, with a beginning, middle and an end. The greatness of the characters follows from the fact that they play heir part in great action —action started by a momentous cause, involving the fortunes of many, and leading to far-reaching results. The episodes should all be subordinate to this action or plot. Such an action is the live wire of an epic.

Now, what is the action in *Hyperion*? The faller Titans, are in as prostrate a plight as Milton's fallen angels; while these rally at Satan's exposition of a hopeful plan of campaign, the Titans, with the solitary exception of Enceladus, are in the grip of a despondency too strong for them to throw off. Saturn, Beelzebub and Moloch have the fighting spirit that promises conflict. The attitude of the Titans is not very different from pure defeatism: they are made to realize by their sagest counseller, Oceanus that wisdom consists in submitting to the altered condition in a spirit of philosophic resignation to the eternal Law of the Universe. The central idea of *Hyperion* is the unwisdom of revolting against it. The best way to help themselves and the world's progress is to welcome the lot of being scrapped and laid on the shelf, making room for a better race. Clymene underlines and drives home her father's exhortation by citing

an experience. When the ravishing strains of Apollo's lyre are heard it is time to fling aside the primitive sea-shell! She is also for showing a clean pair of heels from the battlefield! Thus, apart from the fact that "the story plunges not even in the middle, but near the close," the very 'philosophy' of the poem cuts off the chance of a conflict or action. The story is strangled by its philosophy. By the very law that "on our heels a fresh perfection treads" Hyperion was foredoomed to fail. Against that law he has not the ghost of a chance. Under the very conditions of the initial situation there cannot be any development of events. We need not hold our breath for what may follow. This 'magnificent torso' could never have been completed on an epic scale. We may for clearness re-state the thesis in Professor Herford's words:

"Milton's theology introduced a conflict of purpose into his epic which is never overcome; but it secured to the vanquished fiends a cause and a triumph: they move us by their heroic resolve as well as by their suffering. Keats' theology was the faith proper to a devotee of the principle of beauty in all things, 'that first in beauty shall be first in might'; *but this law, recognised and proclaimed by the defeated Titans themselves, makes any enterprise like Satan's not merely unnecessary to the scheme of things, but in flagrant contradiction with it. The ruined Titans are inferior not in nobility, but in strength and spirit. The pathos of a hopelessly and finally lost cause broods from the first over the scene; the contrast between the passionate recovery of the still mighty archangel from his fall, and the slow, sad awakening of aged Saturn, in typical.*" In other words, the poem starts with a moral that is uncongenial to the animating spirit of an epic and to epic action.

To complete the story he might have made *Hyperion* join forces with Eneladus, and roused his comrades to fresh struggle. But he has burnt his boats by depicting Hyperion as already tainted by mortality:

Divine ye were created, and divine
In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd,
Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and ruled:

> Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath;
> Actions of rage and passion; even as
> I see them, on the mortal world beneath,
> In men who die.

In other words, symptoms of the coming death are on him already. And yet, he is exhorted to "seize the arrow's barb before the tense string murmur." Enters now Apollo, not like a hero, but 'weeping and raving'.

The lack of action in the poem altogether takes away from its epic quality. As Bridges says, "the subject lacks the solid basis of outward event by which epic maintains its interest; there is little but imagination, and a one-sidedness or incompleteness of that; a languor which, though it has now generally left the language, lingers in the main design." No question arises now as to whether the action is "single, great and complete". The crucial feature of an epic, its *differentia*, is missing.

If great action is not here, great characters too are not here, though the figures may be stupendous in physical size. Episodes and amplification are out of the question in a small fragment.

But we have the uplifted style appropriate to an epic. The very opening is impressive; and though its promise may not be quite vindicated by "the mournful dialogue between the discrowned Saturn and the Titaness Thea, his would-be comforter"—because it comes as a cold douche on our hopes of a rousing story—the similes and the description of these doleful characters sustain the exalted style. The rhythm is stately, the diction and the phrasing in keeping with it:

> As when, upon a tranced summer-night,
> Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,
> Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,
> Dream, and so dream all night without a stir—

Nevertheless, it is a lugubrious strain; but just when we need a change comes the heroic tone and we have scenes that glow with the dazzling gold and crimson of Hyperion's palace, which

> Glar'd a blood-red through all its thousand courts,
> Arches and domes, and fiery galleries;
> And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds
> Flush'd angerly.

"The wrath and terror of the sun-god to his flaming palace" comes at the psychological moment to sustain the epic illusion. In the last two hundred lines of the first book the Miltonic note sounds clear, though the Keatsian overtones are here as in the rest of the poem. In spite of some exaggeration there is truth as well as felicity in Mr. Ridley's appraisement of this passage: "But now we have had enough, and perhaps more than enough, of Saturn and Thea. The poem shows signs of flagging, and there is need of a change of scene, and still more imperative need of action. And the change and the action both come. With the entry of

Blazing Hyperion on his orbed fire.

the poem, like Milton's noble and puissant nation, rouses itself like a strong man after sleep and shakes its invincible locks. Through two hundred lines, to the end of the first book, there is hardly a moment's slackening in the sustained power of its movement and the swelling flood of its harmonies. Again and again the ear catches the inexorable rhythm, the 'majestic instancy' of *Paradise Lost*, the clang of the hammers on Cyclopean anvils. Here is a passage which leaves no doubt what master Keats had determined to acknowledge. (Mr. Ridley here cites the passage already cited: "His palace bright...... Flush'd angerly, 176-82). This time both voice and imagination are Miltonic. And, as we should expect, the reminiscences of Milton, both verbally and in idiom, are frequent."

If most things essential to the epic are missing in *Hyperion*, it has indubitably the epic style—in which feature it comes closest to Milton, though the Miltonic cadence and verse-paragraph are far ahead.

When the stately rhythm and phrasing are in harmony with the character of the scene or figure described, or with the emotion-tone, it has the rightness of great art. The couple of hundred lines describing the dazzling splendour of the sun-god roused to wrath and terror by the omens he perceives possess this harmony of form and content. But discord creeps in when the philosophic surrender to the new powers has to be presented in exalted language by Oceanus. His style in relation to his message is like Goliath's armour on David's body. He begins

with a roar : "O ye, whom wrath consumes... fire."—but ends like an inoffensive nightingale or sucking dove. So, in Book III the poet realizes that his Muse is too "weak to sing such tumults dire", and comes down to his own native accents with the realization:

> A solitary sorrow best befits
> Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.

The organ notes die away and we hear "the soft warble of the Dorian flute"; we hear the Samson-like wail of: "For me, dark, dark, and painful vile oblivion seals my eyes".[1]

PARADISE LOST AND HYPERION

It argues a lack of humour to compare *Paradise Lost* and *Hyperion*. Claiming, as it does universal space, with the constituent regions of Heaven, Earth, Chaos and Hell, for its scene, Eternity for its time, "the unrolling of human misery through vast successions of shadowy generations" as but one of its episodes, *Paradise Lost* shows a vastness of conception that should make any such comparison fanciful in the extreme, like the comparison of the Atlantic with a lagoon. Size and amplitude apart, Milton's epic is full of bustle and moment in many of its books. We have the sports and races of the fallen angels in Hell, Satan's voyage through Chaos, the war in Heaven, and challenging eloquence that is almost like an action. The epic breathes a spirit of dynamism that is the very antithesis of the languor and stillness pervading *Hyperion*. There is in *Paradise Lost* a cargo of learning drawn from a well-nigh inexhaustible store of history, geography and romance,—a ballast to ensure the stately grandeur of the style. "From Herodotus to Olaus Magnus, and onward to the latest discoveries in geography and astronomy, the researches of Galileo, and the descriptions given by contemporary travellers of China and the Chinese, or of the North American Indians, Milton compels the authors he had read, both ancient and modern, to contribute to the gracing

1 Cf. *Samson Agonises*, 80.

of his work." All this heavy inlaying of costly material,—as in a rare piece of marquetry,—which was an integral part of Milton's scholarly imagination, is almost absent from *Hyperion*. Milton's style and diction were the natural accents of his mind, whereas in *Hyperion* Keats speaks in a borrowed voice, attempting a form that is not in key with the quality of his imagination, though he comes off splendidly in the adopted mode. The theme of *Paradise Lost*, like the theme of *Hyperion*, is far away from the characters and events of human life, but it is informed with an intense human interest, especially in the books in which Satan and other leaders of the Fallen Angels figure prominently. Adam and Eve, too, are intensely humanized and *Hyperion*, on the other hand, is not only removed from the sphere of human life and its problems, but fills its canvas with colossal shapes, that are vague and shadowy. Hyperion, Saturn, Enceladus, Clymene, Apollo and Mnemosyne are not even types; they are but huge silhouettes and voices.

..Though comparison is out of court, we may glance at features of Keats' poem, which it owes to *Paradise Lost*. The general influence on style and dictum demands notice in a special section. In *Paradise Lost* we see the artist and the theologian in Milton at cross-purposes. His theology required that the interest should centre on God and on Adam and Eve; but the dramatic instincts of Milton, in league with those of the political rebel against tyranny, induced him to make Satan the dominating figure of the epic. "Thus Milton puts our sympathies on what is officially, the wrong side. They are with Satan, not with God, and they are only partly transferred from Satan to Adam and Eve." By way of compensation for thus weighting the scale in favour of Satan, Milton, in the later books, make Satan less impressive, moving Adam and Eve into the foreground of our interest and sympathy. Even so, Adam and Eve, being but passive agents, not actors, but victims of Satan's revenge, lack the needed 'go' to retrieve the interest lost by the repetition shrinking of Satan. The poet had now one resource up his sleeve, and produces it. He substitutes pageant for story. The reader is made to switch on his interest from story to the cinematographic scenes of human history through the ages from the Expulsion from the Garden down to the Millennium.

We see in *Hyperion* a similar conflict of *motifs*. Here, the poet's creative impulse is at odds with his philosophy—the symbolic meaning behind the dispossession of the Titans by the younger gods. He begins by enlisting our interest on the side of the fallen Titans, as Milton does on the side of the fallen angels, without Milton's advantage and resources. Hence the theme turns out a blind alley. The superficial resemblance between the deliberations of Satan and his followers in Hell and those of the Titans conceals a radical difference in spirit.

THI VOICE OF MILTON

In spirit and leit-motif *Hyperion* is a far cry from *Paradise Lost*, ev n as the genius of Keats is from that of Milton : but Keats has cast his poem in the same mould as Milton's. The situation of the fallen Titans recalls that of the fallen angels, so do the speeches of the former the debate of the latter in Hell. But this resemblance between the first two books of *Paradise Lost* and *Hyperion* conceals an essential difference in temper and outlook. It is the difference between revolt and fatalistic submission, between activism and languor, between self-assertion and self-abnegation. The Titans or the elder gods and the Olympians or the younger represent but two stages or degrees of benignity, order and beauty, whereas the fallen angels are the uncompromising enemies of the good. The adventure of Satan to Eden is motivated by the desire to conquer an empire for the unfettered reign of Evil, in place of the third part of Heaven they have lost.

It is not in this superficial resemblance between the situation of the Titans and that of the fallen angels that we see the real influence of Milton, but in the diction borrowed from Milton, in Miltonic ideas, in Miltonic 'intonation', in the Miltonic construction and inversions, the Miltonic 'turn' or rounding of a period by repetition of words and, last not least, in the march of the verse. True, "the god-gifted organ-voice" is not here, nor "the seven-fold hallelujah chorus"; but certainly, there is "a considerable measure of that grave, ordered progress never hurrying, and halting only by deliberate design, that relentless

march of the legions, of which Milton alone among English poets knew the secret."

I. MILTONIC SYNTAX :

Classical Construction. 1. Like Milton Keats makes *what* do duty for a substantive : In smoothest silence save that solemn tubes (Bk. i, 206). which reminds us of *Paradise Lost* ii, 20, 21 :

> With what besides in Counsel or in Fight,
> Hath been achieved of merit.

2. *Elliptical Constructions;* uncertain where (ii, 9) which recalls *Paradise Lost*, III, 75, 76 :

> Firm land imbosom'd without Firmament,
> Uncertain which, in Ocean or in Air.

3. We have the *Miltonic parenthesis, ellipsis, and the use of adjective as adverb in* Bk. ii, 50-55 :

> still upon the flint
> He ground *severe* his skull, with open mouth
> And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him
> Asia, born of most enormous Caf,
> Who *cost* her mother Tellus keener pangs
> *Though feminine*, than any of her sons.

In *Though feminine* we have the same elliptical parenthesis as often in Milton in *severe* we have the classical use of the adjective as adverb ; a stream went voiceless by (i. 11) ; shook horrid (i, 94) ; let the rose glow intense (iii, 15) are other illustrations of this. In *cost* we have an example of Miltonic diction, which is dealt with under that heading.

4. *The classical use of the participle in place of a relative sentence* in : thus afflicted (i, 56) ; so gifted (iii, 68).

5. *The classical use of the participle in place of the abstract noun in*; barren vow (cf. Milton's *vast abrupt*).

6. We have also Miltonic *redundance* in

> I, Coelus, wonder, how they came and whence
> And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be (i, 314, 315)

Cf. *Paradise Lost* ii, 90 : I know thee, stranger, who thou art.

II. THE MILTONIC 'TURN' IN 'HYPERION':

The use of what Dryden calls the *turn* or studied repetition of words and phrases for specific poetic effects is one of the salient features of the style of *Paradise Lost*. The device consists in repeating the same word or phrase in a different relation with a view to securing either emphasis or musical effect or both; or for presenting the thought in a new aspect. In classical literature the frequent use of the term becomes an affectation in Ovid.

One of the finest instances of the use of the *turn* by Milton is the passage in *Paradise Lost* (iv, 641-58) in which Eve, having enumerated the delights of Paradise re-enumerates them with a few slight changes to place her love for Adam at the pinnacle of them all,—the repetition enhancing the music. In the second book of *Paradise Lost* we are told how the damned

> feel by turns the bitter change
> Of fierce extremes by change made more fierce (598)

By the same device in Bk. vii. (24-27) Milton heightens the pathos of the calamities that have beset him:

> though fall'n on evil days
> On evil days though fall'n and evil tongues.

In *Hyperion*, Keats, under the influence of Milton employs this device, often with success:

i How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self (i, 35, 36)

ii sometimes eagle's wings,
Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,
Darken'd the place; and neighing steeds were heard,
Not heard before by Gods or wondering men
(i, 182-85)

iii Unus'd to bend, by hard compulsion bent (i, 300)

iv There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines
. . . .
Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines
(ii, 116, 122)

v it enforc'd me to bid sad farewell
To all my empire : farewell sad I took (ii, 238, 239)
(the brook that)
Doth fear to meet the sea : but sea it met (ii, 302)

III MILTONIC DICTION : *Breath of morn,*[1] *perplex,*[2] *jarr'd,*[3] *slope,*[4] *lucent,*[5] *colure,*[6] *zenith,*[7] *essence,*[8] *tangled hair,*[9] *no shape distinguishable,*[10] *locks not oozy,*[11] *Dorian,*[12] *first-endeavouring,*[13] *horrid.*[14] Though these words are found in other writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, there is no doubt that Keats' absorption in Milton at this time accounts for their presence in *Hyperion.*

IV. We have MILTONIC INVERSIONS—inversions which all poets use to meet the demands of metre and rhyme, but which in Milton are a characteristic feature of his Latinism of style : omens drear, palace bright, metal sick, nadir deep, palpitations sweet, plumes immerse, Phantoms pale, marble swart, radiance faint, gold clouds metropolitan, etc.

V. ECHOES OF MILTONIC IDIOM AND CADENCE : Echoes of 'the Miltonic intonation are index of an even profounder influence of Milton on Keats than direct borrowings point to. Thus, we cannot read Hyperion's questions in Bk. I, 235-39 :

Am I to leave this heaven of my rest,
This cradle of my glory ? This soft clime
This calm luxuriance of blissful light,

1. Bk. I, 2, from *Paradise Lost* iv, 641.
2. l. 170 from *Ibid.* i, 598.
3. l. 224, from *At a Solemn Musick.*
4. l. 204, from *Paradise Lost* iv, 591.
5. l. 239, from *Ibid.* iii, 589.
6. l. 274, from *Paradise Lost* ix, 62.
7. l. 277, from *Ibid.* i, 745.
8. l. 232, from *Ibid.* i, 425.
9. Bk. II, l. 76 from *Lycidas.*
10. l. 79, from *Paradise Lost* iii, 666-8.
11. l. 170 from *Lycidas.*
12. Bk. III, l. 12 from *Paradise Lost* i, 550.
13. Bk. II, l. 171 from *The Vacation Exercise.*
14. Bk. I, l. 94 from *Paradise Lost* ii, 708.

> These crystalline pavilions and pure fanes
> Of all my lucent empire?

without recalling the reverse question about Hell, which comes tearing from the heart of Satan:

> Is this the region, this the soil, the clime,
> Said then the lost archangel, this the seat
> That we must change for Heaven, this mournful gloom
> For that celestial light? (*Paradise Lost* i, 242-5)

Mark the repetition of *this*, and the use of Milton's very word, *clime.* Similarly, the conflict of emotions in Saturn's mind—

> Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,
> Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all despair
> (ii, 91-95)

is couched in the very style of a similar conflict in Satan's mind in *Paradise Lost* (iv, 114-115):

> Thus while he spake, his passion dimm'd his face
> Thrice changed with pale, ire, envie and despair.

We have the Milton's AFFIRMATION BY NEGATION in the italicized phrases of the following passage:

> So ended Saturn; and the God of the Sea,
> Sophist and sage, *from no Athenian grove,*
> But cogitation in his watery shades,
> Arose, *with locks not oozy* and began (Bk. ii, 167-70)

There are phrases, too, that have the true Miltonic ring like *voices of soft proclaim* (with the verb used as substantive); came like an inspiration (ii, 109) which reminds us of 'rose like an exhalation (*Paradise Lost* i, 701); Dark, dark and painful vile oblivion seals my eyes (iii, 87)—a reminiscence of *Samson Agonistes*: 'O dark, dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon'; No shape distinguishable (ii, 79) which recalls (*Paradise Lost* ii, 667): The other shape if shape it might be call'd that shape had none Distinguishable,

VI. MILTONIC SIMILES: The simile of the fear-stricken, winged minions of Hyperion in ii, 197-200 standing like anxious

men gathered in panting troops on wide plains, "when earthquakes jar their battlements and towers", shows the Miltonic combination of vast spaces and multitudes and an engulfing catastrophe. Elsewhere, at the beginning of the first book Keats enables the reader to picture the colossal size of the Titaness, Thea, by means of a measuring rod of comparison—which is just in the manner of Milton :

> By her in stature the tall Amazon
> Had stood a pigmy's height :

It reminds us of the scale whereby Milton would have us measure the size of Satan's spear, and by inference, of Satan himself :

> His spear, to equal which the tallest pine
> Hewn on Norwegian hills, to be the mast
> Of some high ammiral, were but a wand

(*Paradise Lost* i, 292-4)

THE VOICE OF KEATS

Amid the solemn grandeur of the figures and scenes, Miltonic in their magnificence and boldness of outline, we have the subdued tints and alluring lights and shadows that are of Keats own native inspiration. It is like catching sight of flowers and streams and coy graces peeping out amid the clefts of a rocky foreground. Before we have read the overture of fourteen lines we have the chaste and pure outlines of a Greek statue :

> The Naiad mid her reeds
> Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Presently, after a score of lines we have the Keatsian association of Beauty and Sorrow, and the discernment of beauty in sorrow :

> How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
> Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.

We know we have heard something very like it before ; we pause a moment and recollect the roundelay on sorrow in *Endymion* (iv), and perhaps this stanza :

Come then, Sorrow!
Sweetest Sorrow!
Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast:
I thought to leave thee
And deceive thee,
But now of all the world I love thee best.

We have not to proceed far before we light on lines that take us to the very heart of the Romantic Movement with its sense of the mystery of the past in "the green-rob'd senators of mighty woods"; it is a call to the imagination to think of these gigantic lords of the forest as providing a proper *mise-en-scène* for the Gods of the infant world; we are made to feel along with it the enchantment exercised by the stars in the stillness of the summer-night on the branches hushed and held by their dream of them:

Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,

The simile we know is pure Keats, and for a moment we are far away from Milton.

In the comparison of Saturn and Thea to "natural sculpture in Cathedral Cavern" we recognize an image suggested by some of the Parthenon sculptures (which had produced an indelible impression on Keats) applied to what he had observed at first-hand in Fingal's Cave. Then in the description of Hyperion's palace (ll. 176-181) we have mythology dissolving in a gorgeous picture of sunrise heralding a stormy day. If this picture is somewhat remote from the Keats of the Odes,—something excogitated—the lines describing the slow-breathed melodies played by the Zephyrs and the portals of Hyperion's palace opening 'like a rose in vermeil tint of shape'—'in fragrance soft and coolness to the eye'—give us a glimpse of the innermost chamber of the world Keats loved.

In Book II the central thought of the poem is not given in Keats' habitual style, but in lines that are austere and heightened as befits its tone. The scene at the beginning is vague and shadowy. Suddenly, we come upon a vivid and striking image, drawn from personal recollection,

> of the dismal crique
> Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,
> When the chill rain begins at shut of eve
> In dull November. . . . . .

It is not till he comes to Clymene's description of Apollo's ravishing music that Keats gets a chance to indulge the lyric picture of fused melody and colour. The 'rapturous hurried notes' fall like pearl beads—

> Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,
> With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,
> To hover round my head, and make me sick
> Of joy and grief at once.

It is like the breaking in of Lydian airs on Dorian.

In Book III Milton goes down and Keats is on the saddle. In the clouds of morn and even floating like voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills; in the red wine boiling cold as a bubbling well; in the maid blushing keenly—as with a warm kiss surpris'd; in the patient brilliance of the moon; in the silver splendour of the star panting with bliss, we have the intense and impressioned phrases with Keatsian magic on them.

A GREEK AND NO GREEK

As a boy in the Enfield school Keats had yielded to the fascination of Greek legends. It was a fascination that he could never shake himself free of. What was common to the genius of Keats and the soul and form of those legends? He had the same delight as the Greek had in sensuous beauty, the same disposition to see in the manifold forms of nature a spirit at work akin to the human, the same urge to 'incarnate those forms'—the sun, the moon, the clouds, waves, flowers and seasons, sunrise and sunset, dawn and night—"in forms human, but of more than human loveliness." He might thus have lived in that far antiquity when the myths sprang up from the poetic heart of the world, clothed in the living light of wonder, with all the enthralling grace of human form that a beauty-loving race dreamed of. That was why he turned to Greek legends for

inspiration when he bethought himself of themes for the three poems—*Endymion, Hyperion* and *Lamia*—in which he sought to embody "fully his inner experience and his poetic ideals."

If by nature, Keats approached the Greek spirit, he did so partly by culture too. Under the influence of his friend, Haydon, he addressed himself to the study of the Elgin marbles and grasped the principles that directed the technique of the Greek sculptor,—clear, definite outline, economy of means, harmony in construction, accuracy of detail. The development of Keats' art is a growth of this power of achieving purer outline, a finer sense of form and unity of design. In his great odes we see these qualities pre-eminently—not standing by themselves, but combining with the romantic qualities of mystery, strangeness, and subjective colouring and resulting in works of art that are at once classical and romantic. *Endymion*, in spite of occasional lines and passages revealing the classical purity of outline, is on the whole a study in romantic excess and vagueness.

Standing midway between *Endymion* and the *Odes, Hyperion* is the most classical of Keats' poems—classical in its restraint, in its lucidity of outline and dignified march of narrative. There are passages in the first and second books that bear unmistakable evidence of Keats' study of sculpture. The figures of the Naiad who

> 'Mid her reeds
> Pressed her cold finger closer to her lips

and of Saturn

> Upon the sodden ground
> His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,
> Unsceptred; and his realmless eyes were closed;
> While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning to the Earth,
> His ancient mother, for some comfort yet

have been rightly cited as "examples of concentrating an emotion into a supreme moment and presenting it in pure outline against the sky, with the calm dignity and the sublime grace which is the supreme triumph of the sculptor's art."[1] We have

1. De Sélincourt, xliv.

the same statuesque effect in the lines describing Saturn and Thea

> postured motionless,
> Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern
> The frozen God still couchant on the earth,
> And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet :

The same clear-cut chiselling is evident in the grouping and description of the Titans at the opening of Book II. It must be granted, however, that the influence of a static art has impaired the dynamic quality of the poem.

Shelley's ejaculated praise of Keats, 'He was a Greek!' is famous. We have seen in what sense this is true. Keats recaptured more completely than Shelley or Wordsworth "the intense humanizing vision of nature of which the primeval myth was born." He strove after the Greek sense of form and definiteness of outline and the study of Greek sculpture has left its imprint on his mature art, particularly in *Hyperion*.

But it is equally true that the overmastering elements in Keats' genius were romantic, and far away from the Greek spirit. His poetry is largely subjective, his imagination found itself at home in the world of mystery and enchantment. Even *Hyperion* is inlaid with lines charged with the wonder, strangeness and dream-quality that are of the very essence of romanticism ; with lines breathing the magic of nature. The simile of the green-rob'd senators of mighty woods, dreaming all night without a stir, branch-charmed by the earnest stars, aims at giving expression to the sense of a mystic communion between earth and sky. From the same alembic of romanticism we have : the lines about sorrow being rendered more beautiful than Beauty's self ; all 'those acts which Deity supreme Doth ease its heart of love in' ; the 'omens drear' that 'perplexed' Hyperion ; 'the old spirit-leaved book which Starry Uranus saved from the shores of darkness ; Clymene's description of the enchantment on the shifting wind ; doves with music wing'd instead of silent plumes ; the timorous brook fearing to meet the sea and shuddering at the meeting ; the hoar-locks of Saturn shining like a bubbling foam about a Keel when the prow sweeps into a midnight cave ; the sad spaces of oblivion and

tormented streams ; Apollo's lyre, all golden, whose strings touched by his fingers,

> all the vast
> Unwearied ear of the whole universe
> Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth
> Of such new tuneful wonder ;

his yearning to make the silvery splendour of one particular beauteous star pant with bliss ; and his apotheosis at the close, when with "fierce convulse he dies into life."

In discussing the classical inspiration in Keats' poetry we must remember that his poetry of Greek legends did not spring from a first hand knowledge of Greek literature, but from the inspiration of Elizabethan poets—of Chapman, Lyly, Fletcher, Drayton, Spenser and George Sandys. The ancient fables wooed him not in their own garb but in "the sumptuous bravery" of the rich Elizabethan attire. To the Elizabethans "the world of ancient mythology, which had just dawned on their horizon, seemed but an extension of their own kingdom." "Their vivid imagination," observes Dr. de Sélincourt, "absorbed its beauty and found in it a wealth of material by which to illustrate and to interpret their own most deeply felt emotions, so that it became, for all its apparent aloofness, only another means of passionate self-expression. For them the distinctions of classic and romantic, and distinctions of schools, would appear at their best a meaningless piece of pedantry, and at their worst a denial of what was to them a vital truth—the essential unity of human feeling and human experience wherever and whenever it is to be found. And so it is for Keats."

The style of *Hyperion* shows a sinewy compactness as the style of *Endymion* does not. This change in style does not represent a conscious switch-over from the romantic to the classical spirit. It is a consequence of the supersession of Spenser by Milton. It is not from Greek poets but from Milton that he learnt his first great lesson in economy, the rejection of all surplusage. "The example of Milton gave just the necessary curb to the faults natural to a poet of Keats' temperament, and he gained a strength and a dignity, something, as Hunt remarked,

Of the large utterance of the early gods,

for which *Endymion* may be searched in vain."

On the other side of the question there is truth in the observation that Keats, who saw the Greek world through Elizabethan glasses saw it truly; that if the Greek touch is not his, he penetrated "with a sure insight into the vital meaning of Greek ideas", though they re-emerged from him with the glamour of romance.

In discussing the Greek elements in *Hyperion* we may remember that we have in it a great deal of Keats' own invention, besides his 'philosophy'; and that he mixes up Latin conceptions and nomenclature with Greek.

WHY DID KEATS BREAK-OFF IN THE MIDDLE?

In a letter to his friend Reynolds (22nd September, 1819), Keats wrote: "I have given up *Hyperion*; there are too many Miltonic inversions in it—Miltonic verse cannot be written but in an artful, or rather artist's humour. I wish to give myself up to other sensations. English ought to be kept up." But the grammatical inversions are by no means a blot on the poem, nor are they too many, or indulged in as a mannerism. In English the common use,—just the reverse of the French—sets the epithet before the object, but where this does not follow the right order of ideas a poet, as Bridges points out, "must invert either his grammar or his ideas", and Keats "often gets good effect from the proper use of inversion." The 'excessive presence' of inversions can hardly be the reason for the discontinuance of the poem. Woodhouse, as Literary Adviser of Keats' Publishers (Messrs. Taylor and Hessey) said in the advertisement: "The poem, if completed, would have treated of the dethronement of Hyperion, the former god of the sun, by Apollo—and incidentally of those of Oceanus by Neptune, of Saturn by Jupiter, etc., and of war of the Giants for Saturn's re-establishment—with other events, of which we have but very dark hints in the mythological poets of Greece and Rome. In fact, the incidents would have been pure creations of the brain."

The poem, as it stands, affords no ground to think that it could have been completed in the way adumbrated by the advertisement. Keats would have found it difficult to make the fall of Hyperion the central event of the poem, having already shown him in Book I as being under the sway of fear, hope and wrath such as assail "men who die" (329-335). He is a doomed spirit; and he is to be dethroned by Apollo who makes his entry in the third Book not as a conquering hero, with confident power, but with a desperate wail and a confession of paralysing melancholy:

> For me, dark, dark
> And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes:
> I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,
> Until a melancholy numbs my limbs;
> And then upon the grass I sit, and more,
> Like one who once had wings.

He is supposed to regain his latent power under the influence of Mnemosyne, who has deserted the old regime for the new. But what energy can be struck into his veins by a goddess who is described as woe-begone and wailing every morn and eventide (iii, 109-110)? It is doubtful whether Keats could have sustained the interest of the reader in long passages or whole books describing a Homeric contest. Such a war is not particularly interesting even in *Paradise Lost*. Much less would it have been here. Keats' genius was not fitted her heroic poetry, and he knew it only too well; at the beginning of Book III he takes us into his confidence:

> For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire:
> A solitary sorrow best befits
> Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.

He would, if only for this reason, never have embarked on the stormy verse of a Giant's war. In all conscience it was not his intention. De Sélincourt rightly asks: "If Keats had intended to narrate this war, would he have spoilt his story by anticipating its most interesting feature?"—as he does in Book ii, 69-72. Episodical narrations of the fall of Saturn and Oceanus—even had they not been anticipated by i. 322-26 and ii. 236-39—would have been in the nature of an anti-climax.

In spite of the unlifted style there is 'languor in the main design', which rendered continuation impossible—" at least to an artist like Keats." For, as Bridges reminds us, " whatever mental qualities go to make a born artist, none is more essential than an unconscious enthralment to his creative conception. When any sane and true artist has strayed into a fault that falsifies his conception, then his inspiration comes to a stand. Could he go on, as if all were well, it would be because he was lacking in the essential faculty which makes artistic work good."

KEATS' SOURCES

A rambler, like Keats, in Elizabethan literature, had no need to strike into byways to come across references to the war between the Titans and Olympians. At odd places in his favourites —Spenser, Chapman, Sandys, Shakespeare or Milton—Keats could have stumbled on them. In *Paradise Lost* he might have recalled the following passage :

> *Titan* Heav'ns first born
> With his enormous brood, and birthright seis'd
> By younger *Saturn*, he from mightier Jove
> His own and Rhea's son like measure found ;
> So *Jove* usurping reign'd. (i. 510-14).

A passage in Chapman's *Iliad* viii. 420-24, rendering the wrathful scorn of Zeus, which Keats had read before starting for the Lakes, must doubtless have given him more than one hint for the overture of *Hyperion*. Says Zeus in Chapman :

> I weigh not thy displeased spleen, tho' to th' extremest bounds
> Of earth and seas it carry thee, where endless night confounds
> *Japhet*, and my dejected sire, who sit so far beneath
> They never see the flying sun, nor hear the winds that breathe,
> Near to profoundest *Tartarus*.

We see that "profoundest Tartarus" has become a deep vale with a shady sadness ; " where endless night confounds", and

"they never see the flying sun" have transformed themselves into: "Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn, Far from the fiery noon"; Chapman's "nor hear the winds that breathe" starts the four lines beginning with "no stir of air was there": while his 'dejected sire' gives the cue to the vivid picture of Saturn with realmless eyes and bowed head that seemed listening to the earth. The reference in Chapman's *Iliad* (xiv) to the gods of the infernal state which circled Saturn", blending with the recollection of the Druid stones seen at Keswick, inspired the romantic image in *Hyperion* (ii, 34-38) of the dismal cirque of Druid stones upon a forlorn moor.

From other favourite books like Chapman's translation of Hesiod's *Works and Days*, Cooke's of Hesiod's *Theogony* and George Sandy's rendering of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (particularly bks. ii and iii) Keats must have drawn stimulating suggestions. His chief source-books of Greek mythology were Spence's *Polymetis*[1] and the *Pantheon*[2] of 'E. Baldwin' (i.e. Wm. Godwin).

From Baldwin Keats probably got the names of the Titans,—all except Dolor and Caf,—the odd snippet of information that Saturn married Ops, otherwise called Cybele; and in Baldwin's list of giants there were Enceladus and Porphyrion. But Gyges, Briareus, Typhon and Porphyrion found their way into *Hyperion*, not perhaps direct from Baldwin, but from an ode of Ronsard, the famous French poet of the Sixteenth century, one of the 'Pleiades', whose works Keats had with him at this time. When he "rolls out the rebel names he has surely been haunted by the strophes of Ronsard" in which they figure.[3]

Until thirty years ago when Dr. de Sélincourt disproved it, even scholars like Sir Sidney Colvin, who had devoted years of labour to the study of Keats' life and works, believed that the main

1. *Polymetis, or an Enquiry concerning the Agreement between the Works of the Roman Poets and the Remains of the ancient Artists*, by the Reverend Mr. Spence; London, 1747.

2. *The Pantheon; or Ancient History of the Gods of Greece and Rome.* For the use of schools, and young persons of both sexes; by E. Baldwin, London, 1806 (also 1809, 1810, and 1814).

3. Dolor comes from *Auctores Mythographi Latini* (from the words "ex Aethere et Terra. Dolor Dolus, Ira"); Caf from Beckford's *Vathek* and *The Arabian Nights*.

source of Keats' classical inspiration was Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*. What Dr. de Sèlincourt says of this 'source' must interest students: "It is highly probable that if he had found the legends of ancient mythology in Lemprière alone he would have left them there, and it is certain that if he had never seen a dictionary his debt due to the world of Greece would have been the same". In a footnote he says: "He had read Lemprière at school, but was never, as far as we know, inspired to write poetry till he read Spenser, and if Spenser was his inspiration, why should it be supposed that he drew from Lemprière what can be found in Spenser and kindred sources? It is noticeable moreover that his earliest verses have very little classical allusion in them, though at that period Lemprière would naturally be fresh in his mind. It is only after he has become soaked in the Elizabethans that classical story and allusion gain a real hold over him."

HYPERION

BOOK I.

Deep in the shady sadness of a vale
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,
Still as the silence round about his lair;
Forest on forest hung about his head
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
By reason of his fallen divinity
Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went,
No further than to where his feet had stray'd,
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,
Unsceptred; and his realmless eyes were closed;

While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning to the Earth,
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from his place
But there came one, who with a kindred hand
Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low
With reverence, though to one who knew it not.
She was a Goddess of the infant world;
By her in stature the tall Amazon
Had stood a pigmy's height: she would have ta'en
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck;
Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel.
Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,
Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,
When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.
But oh! how unlike marble was that face:
How beautiful, if sorrow had not made
Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self.
There was a listening fear in her regard,
As if calamity had but begun;
As if the vanward clouds of evil days
Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear
Was with its stored thunder labouring up.
One hand she press'd upon that aching spot
Where beats the human heart, as if just there,
Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain:
The other upon Saturn's bended neck
She laid, and to the level of his ear
Leaning with parted lips, some words she spake
In solemn tenóur and deep organ tone:
Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue
Would come in these like accents; O how frail

To that large utterance of the early Gods!'
"Saturn, look up!—though wherefore, poor old King?
"I have no comfort for thee, no not one:
"I cannot say, 'O wherefore sleepest thou?'
"For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth
"Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God;
"And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,
"Has from thy sceptre pass'd; and all the air
"Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.
"Thy thunder, conscious of the new command,
"Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house;
"And thy sharp lightning in unpractised hands
"Scorches and burns our once serene domain.
"O aching time! O moments big as years!
"All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth,
"And press it so upon our weary griefs
"That unbelief has not a space to breathe.
"Saturn, sleep on:—O thoughtless, why did I
"Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?
"Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes?
"Saturn, sleep on! while at thy feet I weep."

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,
Those green-rob'd senators of mighty woods,
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir,
Save from one gradual solitary gust
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,
As if the ebbing air had but one wave;
So came these words and went; the while in tears
She touch'd her fair large forehead to the ground,
Just where her falling hair might be outspread

A soft and silken mat for Saturn's feet.
One moon, with alteration slow, had shed
Her silver seasons four upon the night,
And still these two were postured motionless,
Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern;
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,
And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet:
Until at length old Saturn lifted up
His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,
And that fair kneeling Goddess; and then spake,
As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard
Shook horrid with such aspen-malady:
"O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,
"Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face;
"Look up, and let me see our doom in it;
"Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape
"Is Saturn's; tell me, if thou hear'st the voice
"Of Saturn; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,
"Naked and bare of its great diadem,
"Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had power
"To make me desolate? whence came the strength?
"How was it nurtur'd to such bursting forth,
"While Fate seem'd strangled in my nervous grasp?
"But it is so; and I am smother'd up,
"And buried from all godlike exercise
"Of influence benign on planets pale,
"Of admonitions to the winds and seas,
"Of peaceful sway above man's harvesting,
"And all those acts which Deity supreme
"Doth ease its heart of love in.—I am gone
"Away from my own bosom: I have left

"My strong identity, my real self,
"Somewhere between the throne, and where I sit
"Here on this spot of earth. Search, Thea, search!
"Open thine eyes eterne, and sphere them round
"Upon all space: space starr'd, and lorn of light;
"Space region'd with life-air; and barren void;
"Spaces of fire, and all the yawn of hell.—
"Search, Thea, search! and tell me, if thou seest
"A certain shape or shadow, making way
"With wings or chariot fierce to repossess
"A heaven he lost erewhile: it must—it must
"Be of ripe progress—Saturn must be King.
"Yes, there must be a golden victory;
"There must be Gods thrown down, and trumpets blown
"Of triumph calm, and hymns of festival
"Upon the gold clouds metropolitan,
"Voices of soft proclaim, and silver stir
"Of strings in hollow shells; and there shall be
"Beautiful things made new, for the surprise
"Of the sky-children; I will give command:
"Thea! Thea! Thea! where is Saturn?"

This passion lifted him upon his feet,
And made his hands to struggle in the air,
His Druid locks to shake and ooze with sweat,
His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing deep;
A little time, and then again he snatch'd
Utterance thus.—"But cannot I create?
"Cannot I form? Cannot I fashion forth
"Another world, another universe,
"To overbear and crumble this to nought?

"Where is another chaos? Where?"—That word
Found way unto Olympus, and made quake
The rebel three.—Thea was startled up,
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,
As thus she quick-voic'd spake, yet full of awe.

"This cheers our fallen house: come to our friends,
"O Saturn! come away, and give them heart;
"I know the covert, for thence came I hither."
Thus brief; then with beseeching eyes she went
With backward footing through the shade a space:
He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the way
Through aged boughs, that yielded like the mist
Which eagles cleave upmounting from their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears were shed,
More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe:
The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-bound,
Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's voice.
But one of the whole mammoth-brood still kept
His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty;—
Blazing Hyperion on his orbed fire
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up
From man to the sun's God; yet unsecure:
For as among us mortals omens drear
Fright and perplex, so also shuddered he—
Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated screech,
Or the familiar visiting of one
Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,

Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp;
But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve,
Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace bright
Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,
And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,
Glar'd a blood-red through all its thousand courts,
Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries;
And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds
Flush'd angerly: while sometimes eagle's wings,
Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,
Darken'd the place; and neighing steeds were heard,
Not heard before by Gods or wondering men.
Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths
Of incense, breath'd aloft from sacred hills,
Instead of sweets, his ample palate took
Savour of poisonous brass and metal sick:
And so, when harbour'd in the sleepy west,
After the full completion of fair day,—
For rest divine upon exalted couch
And slumber in the arms of melody,
He pac'd away the pleasant hours of ease
With stride colossal, on from hall to hall;
While far within each aisle and deep recess,
His winged minions in close clusters stood,
Amaz'd and full of fear; like anxious men
Who on wide plains gather in panting troops,
When earthquakes jar their battlements and towers.
Even now, while Saturn, rous'd from icy trance,
Went step for step with Thea through the woods,
Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,
Came slope upon the threshold of the west;
Then, as was wont, his palace-door flew ope

In smoothest silence, save what solemn tubes,
Blown by the serious Zephyrs, gave of sweet
And wandering sounds, slow-breathed melodies ;
And like a rose in vermeil tint and shape,
In fragrance soft and coolness to the eye,
That inlet to severe magnificence
Stood full blown, for the God to enter in.

He enter'd, but he enter'd full of wrath ;
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,
And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire,
That scar'd away the meek ethereal Hours
And made their dove-wings tremble. On he flared,
From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,
Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,
And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades,
Until he reach'd the great main cupola :
There standing fierce beneath, he stampt his foot,
And from the basements deep to the high towers
Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before
The quavering thunder thereupon had ceas'd
His voice leapt out, despite of godlike curb,
To this result : "O dreams of day and night !
"O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !
"O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom !
"O lank-eared Phantoms of black-weeded pools !
"Why do I know ye ? why have I seen ye ? why
"Is my eternal essence thus distraught
"To see and to behold these horrors new ?
"Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?
"Am I to leave this haven of my rest
"This cradle of my glory, this soft clime

"This calm luxuriance of blissful light,
"These crystalline pavilions, and pure fanes,
"Of all my lucent empire? It is left
"Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine.
"The blaze, the splendor, and the symmetry.
"I cannot see—but darkness, death and darkness.
"Even here, into my centre of repose,
"The shady visions come to domineer,
"Insult, and blind, and stifle up my pomp.—
"Fall! No, by Tellus and her briny robes!
"Over the fiery frontier of my realms
"I will advance a terrible right arm
"Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel Jove,
"And bid old Saturn take his throne again."—
He spake, and ceas'd the while a heavier threat
Held struggle with his throat but came not forth;
For as in theatres of crowded men
Hubbub increases more they call out "Hush!"
So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms pale
Bestirr'd themselves, thrice horrible and cold;
And from the mirror'd level where he stood
A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.
At this, through all his bulk an agony
Crept gradual from the feet into the crown,
Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular
Making slow way, with head and neck convuls'd
From over-strained might. Releas'd, he fled
To the eastern gates, and full six dewy hours
Before the dawn in season due should blush,
He breath'd fierce breath against the sleepy portals,
Clear'd them of heavy vapours, burst them wide
Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.

The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode
Each day from east to west the heavens through,
Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds ;
Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and hid,
But ever and anon the glancing spheres,
Circles, and arcs, and broad-belting colure,
Glow'd through, and wrought upon the muffling dark
Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir deep
Up to the zenith,—hieroglyphics old,
Which sages and keen-eyed astrologers
Then living on the earth, with labouring thought
Won from the gaze of many centuries :
Now lost, save what we find on remnants huge
Of stone, or marble swart ; their import gone,
Their wisdom long since fled.—Two wings this orb
Possess'd for glory, two fair argent wings,
Ever exalted at the God's approach
And now, from forth the gloom their plumes immense
Rose, one by one, till all outspreaded were ;
While still the dazzling globe maintain'd eclipse,
Awaiting for Hyperion's command
Fain would he have commanded, fain took throne
And bid the day begin, if but for change.
He might not :—No, though a primeval God
The sacred seasons might not be disturb'd.
Therefore the operations of the dawn
Stay'd in their birth, even as here 'tis told.
Those silver wings expanded sisterly,
Eager to sail their orb ; the porches wide
Open'd upon the dusk demesnes of night
And the bright Titan, phrenzied with new woes,
Unus'd to bend, by hard compulsion bent

His spirit to the sorrow of the time ;
And all along a dismal rack of clouds,
Upon the boundaries of day and night,
He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance faint.
There as he lay, the Heaven with its stars
Look'd down on him with pity, and the voice
Of Cœlus, from the universal space,
Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear.
"O brightest of my children dear, earth-born
"And sky-engendered, Son of Mysteries
"All unrevealed even to the powers
"Which met at thy creating ; at whose joys
"And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,
"I, Cœlus, wonder, how they came and whence ;
"And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be,
"Distinct, and visible ; symbols divine,
"Manifestations of that beauteous life
"Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal space :
"Of these new-form'd art thou, oh brightest child !
"Of these, they brethren and the Goddesses !
"There is sad feud among ye, and rebellion
"Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,
"I saw my first-born tumbled from his throne !
"To me his arms were spread, to me his voice
"Found way from forth the thunders round his head !
"Pale wox I, and in vapours hid my face.
"Art thou, too, near such doom ? vague fear there is :
"For I have seen my sons most unlike Gods.
"Divine ye were created, and divine
"In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd,
"Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and ruled :
"Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath ;

"Actions of rage and passion ; even as
"I see them, on the mortal world beneath,
"In men who die.—This is the grief, O Son !
"Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall !
"Yet do thou strive ; as thou art capable.
"As thou canst move about, an evident God :
"And canst oppose to each malignant hour
"Ethereal presence :—I am but a voice ;
"My life is but the life of winds and tides,
"No more than winds and tides can I avail :—
"But thou canst.—Be thou therefore in the van
"Of circumstance ; yea, seize the arrow's barb
"Before the tense string murmour.—To the earth !
"For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.
"Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,
"And of thy seasons be a careful nurse."—
Ere half this region-whisper had come down,
Hyperion arose, and on the stars
Lifted his curved lids, and kept them wide
Until it ceas'd ; and still he kept them wide :
And still they were the same bright, patient stars.
Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,
Like to a diver in the pearly seas,
Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,
And plung'd all noiseless into the deep night.

HYPERION

BOOK II

JUST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings
Hyperion slid into the rustled air,
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place
Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.
It was a den where no insulting light
Could glimmer on their tears; where their own groans
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.
Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd
Ever as if just rising from a sleep,
Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns:
And thus in thousand hugest phantasies
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.
Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon,
Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled:
Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.
Cœus, and Gyges, and Briareüs,
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyrion,

With many more, the brawniest in assault,
Were pent in regions of laborious breath;
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep
Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their limbs
Lock'd up like veins of metal, crampt and screw'd;
Without a motion, save of their big hearts
Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.
Mnemosyne was straying in the world;
Far from her moon had Phœbe wandered;
And many else were free to roam abroad,
But for the main, here found they covert drear.
Scarce images of life, one here, one there,
Lay vast and edgeways; like a dismal cirque
Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,
In dull November, and their chancel vault,
The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.
Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbour gave
Or word, or look, or action of despair.
Creüs was one; his ponderous iron mace
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock
Told of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.
Iäpetus another; in his grasp,
A serpent's plashy neck; its barbed tongue
Squeez'd from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd length
Dead; and because the creature could not spit
Its poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.
Next Cottus: prone he lay, chin uppermost,
As though in pain; for still upon the flint
He ground severe his skull, with open mouth
And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him

Asia, born of most enormous Caf,
Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,
Though feminine, than any of her sons :
More thought than woe was in her dusky face,
For she was prophesying of her glory ;
And in her wide imagination stood
Palm-shaded temples, and high rival fanes,
By Oxus or in Ganges' sacred isles.
Even as Hope upon her anchor leans,
So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk
Shed from the broadest of her elephants.
Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelve,
Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else,
Shadow'd Enceladus ; once tame and mild
As grazing ox unworried in the meads :
Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,
He meditated, plotted, and even now
Was hurling mountains in that second war,
Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger Gods
To hide themselves in forms of beast and bird.
Not far hence Atlas ; and beside him prone
Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd close
Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet
Of Ops the queen all clouded round from sight ;
No shape distinguishable, more than when
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the clouds :
And many else whose names may not be told.
For when the Muse's wings are air-ward spread,
Who shall delay her flight? And she must chaunt
Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had climb'd

With damp and slippery footing from a depth
More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff
Their heads appear'd, and up their stature grew
Till on the level height their steps found ease :
Then Thea spread abroad her trembling arms
Upon the precincts of this nest of pain,
And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's face :
There saw she direst strife ; the supreme God
At war with all the frailty of grief,
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all despair.
Against these plagues he strove in vain ; for Fate
Had pour'd mortal oil upon his head,
A disanointing poison : so that Thea,
Affrighted, kept her still, and let him pass
First onwards in, among the fallen tribe.

As with us mortal men, the laden heart
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,
When it is nighing to the mournful house
Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise ;
So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,
Felt faint, and would have sunk among the rest,
But that he met Enceladus's eye,
Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at once
Came like an inspiration ; and he shouted,
"Titans, behold your God !" at which some groan'd :
Some started on their feet ; some also shouted ;
Some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with reverence ;
And Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,
Show'd her pale cheeks, and all her forehead wan,
Her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow eyes.

There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines
When Winter lifts his voice; there is a noise
Among immortals when a God gives sign,
With hushing finger, how he means to load
His tongue with the full weight of utterless thought,
With thunder, and with music, and with pomp:
Such noise is like the roar of bleak-grown pines;
Which, when it ceases in this mountain'd world,
No other sound succeeds; but ceasing here,
Among these fallen, Saturn's voice therefrom
Grew up like organ, that begins anew
Its strain, when other harmonies, stopt short,
Leave the dinn'd air vibrating silverly,
Thus grew it up—"Not in my own sad breast,
"Which is its own great judge and searcher out,
"Can I find reason why ye should be thus:
"Not in the legends of the first of days,
"Studied from that old spirit-leaved book
"Which starry Uranus with finger bright
"Sav'd from the shores of darkness, when the waves
"Low-ebb'd still hid it up in shallow gloom:—
"And the which book ye know I ever kept
"For my firm-based footstool:—Ah, infirm!
"Not there, nor in sign, symbol, or portent
"Of element, earth, water, air, and fire,—
"At war, at peace, or inter-quarreling
"One against one, or two, or three, or all
"Each several one against the other three,
"As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods
"Drown both, press them both against earth's face,
"Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath
"Unhinges the poor world;—not in that strife,

"Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,
"Can I find reason why ye should be thus;
"No, no-where can unriddle, though I search,
"And pore on Nature's universal scroll·
"Even to swooning, why ye, Divinities,
"The first born of all shap'd and palpable Gods,
"Should cower beneath what, in comparison,
"Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here,
"O'erwhelm'd, and spurn'd, and batter'd, ye are here!
"O Titans, shall I say 'Arise!'—Ye groan:
"Shall I say 'Crouch!'—Ye groan. What can I then?
"O Heaven wide? O unseen parent dear!
"What can I? Tell me, all ye breathren Gods,
"How we can war, how engine our great wrath!
"O speak your counsel now, for Saturn's ear
"It all a-hunger'd. Thou, Oceanus,
"Ponderest high and deep; and in thy face
"I see, astonied, that severe content
"Which comes of thought and musing: give us help!"

So ended Saturn; and the God of the Sea,
Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,
But cogitation in his watery shades,
Arose, with locks not oozy, and began,
In murmurs, which his first-endeavouring tongue
Caught infant-like from the far-foamed sands,
"O ye, whom wrath consumes! who, passion-stung,
"Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies!
"Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears,
"My voice is not a bellows unto ire.
"Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof
"How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop

"And in the proof much comfort will I give,
"If ye will take that comfort in its truth.
"We fall by course of Nature's law, not force
"Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou
"Hast sifted well the atom-universe;
"But for this reason, that thou art the King,
"And only blind from sheer supremacy,
"One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,
"Through which I wandered to eternal truth.
"And first, as thou was not the first of powers,
"So art thou not the last; it cannot be:
"Thou art not the beginning nor the end.
"From chaos and parental darkness came
"Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,
"That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends
"Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,
"And with it light, and light, engendering
"Upon its own producer, forthwith touch'd
"The whole enormous matter into life.
"Upon that very hour, our parentage,
"The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest:
"Then thou first-born, and we the giant-race,
"Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous realms.
"Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain;
"O folly! for to bear all naked truths,
"And to envisage circumstance, all calm,
"That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well!
"As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far
"Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs;
"And as we show beyond that Heaven and Earth
"In form and shape compact and beautiful,
"In will, in action free, companionship,

"And thousand other signs of purer life;
"So on our heels a fresh perfection treads,
"A power more strong in beauty, born of us
"And fated to excel us, as we pass
"In glory that old Darkness: nor are we
"Thereby more conquer'd, than by us the rule
"Of shapeless Chaos. Say, doth the dull soil
"Quarrel with the proud forests it hath fed,
"And feedeth still, more comely than itself?
"Can it deny the chiefdom of green groves?
"Or shall the tree be envious of the dove
"Because it cooeth, and hath snowy wings
"To wander wherewithal and find its joys?
"We are such forest-trees, and our fair boughs
"Have bred forth, not pale solidary doves,
"But eagles golden-feather'd, who do tower
"Above us in their beauty, and must reign
"In right thereof; for 'tis the eternal law
"That first in beauty should be first in might:
"Yea, by that law, another race may drive
"Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.
"Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,
"My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?
"Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along
"By noble winged creatures he hath made?
"I saw him on the calmed waters scud,
"With such a glow a beauty in his eyes,
"That it enforc'd me to bid sad farewell
"To all my empire: farewell sad I took,
"And hither came, to see how dolorous fate
"Had wrought upon ye; and how I might best
"Give consolation in this woe extreme.

"Receive the truth, and let it be your balm."

Whether through poz'd conviction, or disdain,
They guarded silence, when Oceanus
Left murmuring what deepest thought can tell?
But so it was, none answer'd for a space,
Save one whom none regarded, Clymene:
And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,
With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking mild,
Thus wording timidly among the fierce:
"O Father, I am here the simplest voice,
"And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,
"And this thing woe crept in among our hearts,
"There to remain for ever, as I fear:
"I would not bode of evil, if I thought
"So weak a creature could turn off the help
"Which by just right should come of mighty Gods;
"Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell
"Of what I heard, and how it made me weep,
"And know, that we had parted from all hope.
"I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,
"Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land
"Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.
"Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief;
"Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth;
"So that I felt a movement in my heart
"To chide, and to reproach that solitude
"With songs of misery, music of our woes;
"And sat me down, and took a mouthed shell
"And murmur'd into it, and made melody—
"O melody no more! for while I sang,
"And with poor skill let pass into the breeze

"The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand
"Just opposite, an island of the sea,
"There came enchantment with the shifting wind,
"That did both drown and keep alive my ears.
"I threw my shell away upon the sand,
"And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd
"With that new blissful golden melody.
"A living death was in each gush of sounds,
"Each family of rapturous hurried notes,
"That fell, one after one, yet all at once,
"Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string:
"And then another, then another strain,
"Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,
"With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,
"To hover round my head, and make me sick
"Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,
"And I was stopping up my frantic ears,
"When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,
"A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tune,
"And still it cried, 'Apollo! young Apollo!
"'The morning-bright Apollo! young Apollo!'
"I fled, it follow'd me, and cried 'Apollo!'
"O Father, and O Brethren, had ye felt
"Those pains of mine; O Saturn, hadst thou felt,
"Ye would not call this too indulged tongue
"Presumptuous, in thus venturing to be heard."

So far her voice flow'd on, like timorous brook
That, lingering along a pebbled coast,
Doth fear to meet the sea: but sea it met,
And shudder'd; for the overwhelming voice
Of huge Enceladus swallow'd it in wrath:

"When all the fair Existences of heaven
"Came open-eyed to guess what we would speak :—
"That was before our brows were taught to frown,
"Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds ;
"That was before we knew the winged thing,
"Victory, might be lost, or might be won.
"And be ye mindful that Hyperion,
"Our brightest brother, still is undisgraced—
"Hyperion, lo ! his radiance is here ! "

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,
And they beheld, while still Hyperion's name
Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,
A pallid gleam across his features stern :
Not savage, for he saw full many a God
Wroth as himself. He look'd upon them all,
And in each face he saw a gleam of light,
But splendider in Saturn's, whose hoar locks
Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel
When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.
In pale and silver silence they remain'd,
Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn,
Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps,
All the sad spaces of oblivion,
And every gulf, and every chasm old,
And every height, and every sullen depth,
Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented streams :
And all the everlasting cataracts,
And all the headlong torrents far and near,
Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,
Now saw the light and made it terrible.
It was Hyperion :—a granite peak

His bright feet touch'd, and there he stay'd to view
The misery his brilliance had betray'd
To the most hateful seeing of itself.
Golden his hair of short Numidian curl,
Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade
In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk
Of Memnon's image at the set of sun
To one who travels from the dusking East:
Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's harp
He utter'd, while his hands contemplative
He press'd together, and in silence stood.
Despondence seiz'd again the fallen Gods
At sight of the dejected King of Day,
And many hid their faces from the light:
But fierce Enceladus sent forth his eyes
Among the brotherhood; and, at their glare,
Uprose Iäpetus, and Creüs too,
And Phorcus, sea-born, and together strode
To where he towered on his eminence.
There those four shouted forth old Saturn's name;
Hyperion from the peak loud answered, "Saturn!"
Saturn sat near the Mother of the Gods,
In whose face was no joy, though all the Gods
Gave from their hollow throats the name of "Saturn!"

HYPERION

BOOK III.

THUS in alternate uproar and sad peace,
Amazed were those Titans utterly.
O leave them, Muse! O leave them to their woes;
For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire:
A solitary sorrow best befits
Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.
Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt find
Many a fallen old Divinity
Wandering in vain about bewildered shores.
Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp,
And not a wind of heaven but will breathe
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute;
For lo! 'tis for the Father of all verse.
Flush every thing that hath a vermeil hue,
Let the rose glow intense and warm the air,
And let the clouds of even and of morn
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills;
Let the red wine within the goblet boil,
Cold as a bubbling well; let faint-lipp'd shells,
On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion turn

Through all their labyrinths; and let the maid
Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surpris'd
Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech,
In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,
And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath the shade:
Apollo is once more the golden theme!
Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun
Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his peers?
Together had he left his mother fair
And his twin-sister sleeping in their bower,
And in the morning twilight wandered forth
Beside the osiers of a rivulet,
Full ankle-deep in lilies of the vale.
The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few stars
Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush
Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle
There was no covert, no retired cave
Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,
Though scarcely heard in many a green recess.
He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright tears
Went trickling down the golden bow he held.
Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he stood,
While from beneath some cumbrous boughs hard by
With solemn step an awful Goddess came,
And there was purport in her looks for him,
Which he with eager guess began to read
Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said:
'How cam'st thou over the unfooted sea?
'Or hath that antique mien and robed form
'Mov'd in the vales invisible till now

"Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er
"The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone
"In cool mid-forest. Surely I have traced
"The rustle of those ample skirts about
"These grassy solitudes, and seen the flowers
"Lift up their heads, as still the whisper pass'd
"Goddess! I have beheld those eyes before,
"And their eternal calm, and all that face,
"Or I have dream'd."—"Yes," said the supreme shape.
"Thou hast dream'd of me; and awaking up
"Didst find a lyre all golden by thy side,
"Whose strings touch'd by thy fingers, all the vast
"Unwearied ear of the whole universe
"Listen'd in pain and pleasure at the birth
"Of such new tuneful wonder. Is't not strange
"That thou shouldst weep, so gifted? Tell me, youth,
"What sorrow thou canst feel; for I am sad
"When thou dost shed a tear: explain thy griefs
"To one who in this lonely isle hath been
"The watcher of thy sleep and hours of life,
"From the young day when first thy infant hand
"Pluck'd witless the weak flowers, till thine arm
"Could bend that bow heroic to all times.
"Show thy heart's secret to an ancient Power
"Who hath forsaken old and sacred thrones
"For prophecies of thee, and for the sake
"Of loveliness new born."—Apollo then,
With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes,
Thus answer'd, while his white melodious throat
Throbb'd with the syllables.—"Mnemosyne!
"Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how;
"Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest?

"Why should I strive to show what from thy lips
"Would come no mystery? For me, dark, dark,
"And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes:
"I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,
"Until a melancholy numbs my limbs;
"And then upon the grass I sit, and moan,
"Like one who once had wings.—O why should I
"Feel curs'd and thwarted, when the liegeless air
"Yields to my step aspirant? why should I
"Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet?
"Goddess benign, point forth some unknown thing:
"Are there not other regions than this isle?
"What are the stars? There is the sun, the sun!
"And the most patient brilliance of the moon!
"And stars by thousands! Point me out the way
"To any one particular beauteous star,
"And I will flit into it with my lyre,
"And make its silvery splendour pant with bliss.
"I have heard the cloudy thunder: Where is power?
"Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity
"Makes this alarum in the elements,
"While I here idle listen on the shores
"In fearless yet in aching ignorance?
"O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,
"That waileth every morn and eventide,
"Tell me why thus I rave, about these groves!
"Mute thou remainest—Mute! yet I can read
"A wondrous lesson in thy silent face:
"Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.
"Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events, rebellions,
"Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,
"Creations and destroyings, all at once

"Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,
"And deify me, as if some blithe wine
"Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,
"And so become immortal."—Thus the God,
While his enkindled eyes, with level glance
Beneath his white soft temples, steadfast kept
Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.
Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush
All the immortal fairness of his limbs;
Most like the struggle at the gate of death;
Or liker still to one who should take leave
Of pale immortal death, and with a pang
As hot as death's is chill, with fierce convulse
Die into life: so young Apollo anguish'd:
His very hair, his golden tresses famed
Kept undulation round his eager neck.
During the pain Mnemosyne upheld
Her arms as one who prophesied.—At length
Apollo shriek'd;—and lo! from all his limbs
Celestial * * * * * *

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NOTES

Hyperion, in Greek mythology, a Titan, the son of Uranus (god of the sky) and Gæa (the goddess of the earth), who correspond to the Roman Cœlus and Tellus.

BOOK I

l. 3. *eve's one star*, Venus.

l. 4. *Saturn*, An ancient Italian deity who became early identified with the Cronos of the Greeks. Ops, the personification of wealth and plenty, was his wife, and both were looked upon as the guardian deities of agriculture and all vegetation. Ops corresponds to the Greek Cybele or Rhea, the wife of Cronos. Cronos, in Greek mythology, was a Titan, the son of Uranus and Gæa (or Ge). At the instigation of his mother, he emasculated his father for having thrown the Cyclopes (who were likewise the children of Uranus and Ge) into Tartarus. He thereupon usurped the government of the world, which had till then belonged to his father, but was in turn dethroned by Zeus. He was the husband of Rhea, by whom he became the father of Hestia, Demeter, Hera, Hades, Poseidon, and Zeus. In Keats' poem the Titans as well as the gods who superseded them are called sometimes by their Greek names, sometimes by their Roman. Thus Cronos figures as Saturn, but his wife has her Greek name in Book II, l. 4, while in lines 78 and 113 she is given the Roman alias Ops.

l. 9. *Robs not etc.* This second negative is an archaic expletive and *not* should be ignored.

feather'd grass, the downy flower-spike of the grass.

l. 11. *voiceless*, as if it had lost its voice through grief at the fallen state of the god.

l. 12. *spreading a shade*, spreading all around him the shadow of his sadness.

the naiad, water-nymph of river, lake, fountain, or spring.

ll. 13-14. *the naiad .... lips*, a static image, revealing the influence of Greek sculpture on Keats' mind at the time he was revolving the theme of *Hyperion*. The Parthenon sculptures brought from Greece by Lord Elgin and installed in the British Museum had made a profound impression on Keats.

l. 17. *And slept*, an unusual metaphor for the foot-marks which still retained their outline and mould ; cf. 'At the level of whose feet an altar slept'—*Fall of Hyperion*.

l. 18. *Nerveless, listless, dead*, note how the monosyllabic adjective, *dead*, gives a sharp, clinching finality to the two di-syllabic adjectives that precede it—a device borrowed from Chatterton. Cf. *withered, forwynd, dead* in Chatterton's *Excellent Ballad of Charitie* ; we have it in *The Eve of St. Agnes*: *meagre, barefoot, wan*, and in *Endymion* : *lovelorn, silent, wan*.

l. 19. *realmless eyes*, eyes that no longer took within its range of vision the realm he once ruled—namely heaven and earth.

l. 20. *the Earth. His ancient mother*, Tellus (Gk. Ge).

l. 23. *there came one*, Thea, wife of Hyperion.

with a kindred hand, the hand of a relation. According to the oldest accounts Hyperion was one of the brothers of Cronos.

l. 26. *a Goddess ..... world*, one of the Titans.

ll. 27-28. *By her,.... height*, a common Miltonic device for conveying an impression of colossal size by an imaginative scale or comparison. *Amazon*, in Greek legend, a race of warrior women supposed to have dwelt on the coast of the Black Sea and the Caucusus Mountains ; *a pigmy*, the pygmies, in Greek mythology, is the name given to a fabulous race of dwarfs of the Nile region who fought with the cranes.

l. 30. *Ixion's wheel*, Ixion, king of the Lapithæ, who was punished by Zeus, for boasting of imaginary favours of Hera, by being fastened to an ever-revolving wheel.

l. 31. *Memphian sphinx*. The sphinx is the enormous stone image with a woman's head and breast, and the body of a lion, 140 feet long, which still stands at Gizeh, near the site of Memphis, the ancient capital of Egypt.

l. 32. *haply* (archaic), perhaps; by hap; from O. N. *happ.* Keats has borrowed the word from Milton; cf. *Paradise Lost, vi:*

Yet, haply, of the race,
In future days, if malice should abound.

l. 33. *When sages .... lore.* The Greek historian of the first century B.C., Diodorus Siculus, tells us that Pythagoras, the Greek mathematician and philosopher, learnt holy lore, geometry, and arithmetic, from Egypt, and that he owed his doctrine of transmigration to the same country; and that the Greek astronomer, Oenopides, got the nation of the obliquity of the sun's path from the priests and astronomers of Egypt. The Greeks, according to Herodotus, obtained from Egypt the calendar, the worship of the twelve gods, Bacchic ceremonies, geometry, the belief in the immortality and the transmigration of souls.

ll. 35-6. *if sorrow had not . . . self.* The first of the many Miltonic 'turns' in the poem. See Introduction under *The Voice of Milton.*

The artifice of language here is not happy. Sorrow making sorrow beautiful, is tautology. But in spite of the 'turn' the sentiment is peculiarly Keatsian.

l. 37. *listening ..... regard,* there was apprehension in her looks, as if she was anticipating more calamities; *regard,* look.

l. 44. *Though an immortal,* a Miltonic parenthesis; cf. *Paradise Lost,* ii:

for who would lose,
Though full of pain, this intellectual being.

l. 50. *in these like accents,* in accents like these.

l. 51. *To,* compared with; *the early Gods,* the Titans, of whom Thea was one.

l. 60. *Thy thunder .... command .... house,* The thunderbolts, wrenched from Saturn's hands by Jove, vacillate in their allegiance between their old and new master; hence they don't fall on their house, but only "rumble reluctantly", being unwilling to strike their former master.

l. 65. *swell out .... truth,* bellow loudly the truth that we have been dethroned.

l. 67. *That unbelief . . . . breathe.* That no moment of respite is granted to us during which we can doubt the truth of our fallen state.

l. 72. *tranced summer-night,* summer-night in which there is such a lull in the air, that nature, with her energies suspended seems rapt in a trance.

l. 74. *branch-charmed . . . . stars,* their branches possessed by the spell exercised by the stars; so does the poet bring together in his imagination the throbbing intensity of the myriad lights of heaven, undimmed by clouds, and the hushed, motionless branches that seem to be held by the mesmeric power of those lights. The passage illustrates, says Professor de Sélincourt, the manner in which the influence of nature and of romance was blended in the mind of Keats.

branch-charmed, "grammatically indefensible, but peculiarly effective for all that, in its suggestions of the potency and the all-pervading influence of the charm which has been laid upon the dreaming oaks."—*de Sélincourt.*

l. 75. *Save from,* save for the stir which comes from.

ll. 72-9. The first of the tailed, epic similes, which contribute to the epic style.

l. 81. *might be,* has the same force here as 'was'.

l. 84. *her silver seasons four,* the four quarters of the lunar month.

ll. 85-6. another example of the influence of Greek sculpture.

l. 86. *Like natural . . . . cavern,* the image is drawn from Fingal's Cave which Keats visited during his Scotch tour. In a letter to Tom Keats, of July, 1881, Keats thus described Fingal's Cave: 'Suppose now the Giants who rebelled against Jove had taken a whole mass of black columns and bound them together like bunches of matches—and then with immense axes had made a cavern in the body of these columns—such is Fingal's Cave. . . . For solemnity and grandeur it far surpasses the finest Cathedral.' This then is 'cathedral cavern'. The phrase, *natural sculpture,* will be clear in the light of the following lines of a poem that follows the description in the same letter:

As I stood its roofing under
Lo! I saw one sleeping there
On the marble cold and bare.

The 'cathedral cavern' is described in that poem as 'This cathedral of the Sea'. Fingal's Cave is a basaltic grotto, in the island of Staffa, 7 miles west of Mull, Scotland, entered by an arch 65 feet in height,—the length of the cave being 200 feet.

l. 94. *horrid*, used in the original Latin sense of *bristling*, as Milton does always.

aspen-malady. The aspen is a species of peculiarly tremulous poplar; Saturn's beard quivered like the leaves of the aspen; we have here the English counterpart of Vālmīki's *pravāte kadalī yathā*.

l. 95. *gold Hyperion*, the epithet reminds us of the golden light of the rising and setting sun—and also of the wealth of life rendered possible by the sun's light and warmth.

l. 100. *wrinkling*, wrinkled.

l. 102. *peers*, used in the sense of 'appears', as in *Winter's Tale* IV, iii, 3: 'Flora Peering in April's front'; *front*, forehead; cf. *Hamlet*, 'the front of Jove himself'.

l. 105. *nervous*, means here 'strong'; cf. the phrase, 'a nervous style'; *nervous* here=having strong sinews.

While Fate .... grasp, i.e. even when I was in the height of my power and Fate seemed etc.

ll. 106-12. These lines glance at Roman ideas of Saturn's office. He was the god who instructed the people in agriculture, gardening, the useful and liberal arts, thus elevating them from barbarism to social order and civilization. His reign was sung by the poets as 'the golden age'. The reader naturally asks: "if these benign functions helped 'to ease Saturn's heart of love', what greater good could the younger gods achieve?" Perhaps Keats would have answered: "well, to carry forward Saturn's work on a higher plane."

l. 110. *above*, over.

l. 112. *doth ease his heart .... in*, gives concrete expression to his love for mankind.

ll. 112-13. *I am gone .... bosom*, the noblest power in me has left me.

l. 116. *Thea*, the proper form of the name is Theia—'the Divine one'.

l. 117. *eterne*, as in *Macbeth* III. ii: 'But in them nature's copy is not eterne'. *Sphere*, turn them round in all directions; an unusual sense.

l. 119. *region'd with*, filled with; the Oxford English Dictionary records no example of a passage in which *region* is used as a verb.

Yawn, gaping abyss.

l. 121. *A certain .... shadow*, the shadow or image of his lost self.

l. 125. *of ripe progress*, close at hand.

l. 126. *golden*, the epithets *gold* and *golden* are overworked in the poem.

l. 129. *clouds metropolitan*, the golden clouds which are the metropolis, i.e. the mother city or capital of the gods; a fine instance of a prosaic word rendered truly poetical by the right placing.

l. 130. *proclaim*, used as a substantive, like Milton's *acclaim*

l. 131. *Of strings in .... shells*, the lyre was originally made from the shell of a tortoise; cf. Dryden: 'When Jubal struck the chorded shell'. (S. Cecilia's Day). The Greeks attributed the invention of the lyre to Hermes who made it with tortoise-shell and strings.

l. 132. *Beautiful .... new*, new types of beauty created, for the surprise of the Titans ('sky-children').

l. 137. *Druid locks*, flowing locks as worn by the old Celtic priests—the Druids. How comes it that when Keats is describing a primitive Roman deity he suddenly remembers that Druids? One of Keats' favourite books, Davies' *Celtic Researches*, connects in a number of place, as Mr. Ridley points out, the Druids with Greece and Rome, with Apollo, with Jupiter, and with Greek mythology in general.

l. 138. *fever out*, goggle out feverishly; the usage is unusual.

l. 145. *chaos*, according to Hesiod's *Theogony*, at first, before all things there was chaos, from which were born Erebos and Night.

l. 146. *Olympus*, a mountain of Macedonia and Thessaly, which the Greeks looked upon as the abode of Zeus and the other gods.

l. 147. *The rebel three*, Jupiter or Jove (Gk. Zeus), Neptune, (Gr. Poseidon) and Pluto (Gr. Hades)—gods of the sky, the sea and the infernal regions respectively.

l. 152. *covert*, a place of shelter or refuge.

l. 164. *mammoth-brood*, assemblage of gigantic beings; the Titans are described as being of enormous size; hence the adjective, *Titanic; mammoth*, gigantic, extinct species of elephant, with long hairy coat and curved tusks, whose fossil and frozen remains are preserved in middle and northern Europe, northern Asia and North America.

l. 166. *orbed fire*, orb or globe of fire; fiery orb. The word that should be in the adjectival position appears as a substantive, while the substantive figures as an adjective—the figure of speech known as *enallage*.

l. 167. *snuffed*, sniffed, inhaled; *teeming*, used in two senses: (1) abundant, (2) flowing copiously.

l. 168. *unsecure*, used in the Latin sense of 'foreboding' 'anxious'.

l. 169. *omens drear*, omens foreboding disaster.

l. 170. *perplex*, as in *Paradise Lost* i, 598, wherein the eclipse 'with fear of change Perplexes monarchs'.

l. 171. *gloom-bird*, the owl.

l. 172. *familiar visiting*, the visitation by the ghost of a friend or relative; *familiar* (noun), means either an intimate friend or the evil spirit in the service of a magician. Both senses are implied here.

l. 173. *passing-bell*, bell tolled when a person was dying in order to obtain prayers for the passing soul.

l. 174. *prophesyings .... lamp*, Midnight lamp; in *Julius Caesar* IV, iii, 274. Says Brutus before the apparition of Caesar's ghost: "How ill this taper burns!"

l. 175. *portion'd*, proportioned.

horrors....nerve, horrible forebodings proportioned to his giant sense.

ll. 176-82. These lines give a picture of gorgeous sunrise after storm; they vitalize the old mythology by re-capturing the nature-poetry that lies locked up within its anthropomorphisms.

l. 181. *Aurorian clouds*, the clouds of the dawn—Aurora

being the Roman goddess of the dawn, corresponding to Greek Eos.

l. 182. *angerly*, adverb from noun, as in Shakespeare, *King John* IV, 1.

l. 189. *metal* sick, 'sick' in the sense of emitting offensive metallic compounds.

l. 192. *For*, instead of.

l. 197. *minions*, generally used in a bad sense; *winged minions*, the Hours referred to in line 216.

l. 198. *amazed*, bewildered, frightened.

l. 200. *Jar*, Keats uses this Miltonio word twice in thirty lines; see Introduction, under the *The Voice of Milton*.

l. 204. *slope*, another Miltonic word.

l. 206. *save what . . . . sweet*, a Miltonic construction; *save what*=save the sounds that. See Introduction—*The Voice of Milton*.

l. 207. *serious*, solemn; grave and thoughtful; the zephyrs or the western breezes of evening induce in one a thoughtful mood, hence the epithet.

ll. 209-10. Note that the rosy tints of the dawn before actual sunrise are brought before the mind's eye.

l. 211. *inlet*, gateway.

l. 212. *full-blown*, like a rose; see line 209.

l. 224. *region*, used in the obsolete sense of "realm' or kingdom; Chaucer. uses it in this sense.

l. 125. *thereupon*, which follows thereupon.

l. 226. *godlike*, the godlike restraint he exercised on his voice.

l. 228. *effigies*, shapes, images.

l. 230. *lank-eared Phantoms*, spirits with long drooping ears; the Phantoms represent the exhalations of pools, and the epithet *lank* is suggested by the black weeds of the pools.

l. 232. *essence*, the ultimate nature or character of anything.

l. 236. *Soft clime*, this region (of the sky) with its delightful climate.

ll. 236-39. *This cradle . . . . empire*? Can the sky irradiated by the morning or evening sun be better described? The

lines are reminiscent of Satan's words in *Paradise Lost* i. 242-5. See introduction.

l. 238. *fanes*, temples, 239. *Lucent*, recalls Milton's 'sun's lucent orb (*Paradise Lost*, iii. 589).

l. 242. *darkness* .... *darkness*, the Miltonic 'turn' again.

l. 244. *shady*, shadowy.

l. 246. *Tellus* ..... *robes*, the goddess of the earth, envelop- by the salt sea.

l. 249. *Shall*, which shall.

l. 257. *mirror'd* luminous and smooth like a mirror.

l. 262. *glancing*, reflecting light in flashes, gleaming intermittently.

l. 263. *Circles* .... *Colure*. 'Colure' is either of two circles of the celestial sphere intersecting at the poles. The equinoctial colure passes at the equinoctial points, and at right angles to this is the solstitial coloure. Keats must have remembered Milton's use of the 'colour' in *Paradise Lost* ix, 63-66 to describe Satan's wanderings round the earth. By adding the words 'circles' and 'arcs' Keats wishes to include among the divisions of the sky the sections formed by the ecliptic and the Celestial Equator. The ecliptic is the great circle of the celestial sphere which is the apparent path of the sun among the stars. The 'Celestial Equator' is the great circle in which the plane of the earth's equator intersects the celestial sphere.

ll. 276-77. *nadir*, *zenith*, (from Arabic, *nazir* 'opposite to' in phrase, nazir-es-semt, 'opposite to the azimuth or zenith.') In astronomy the nadir is the lowest of the two poles of the horizon—directly opposite to the zenith, which is the point of the heavens directly above the observer.

l. 277. *hieroglyphics*, sacred script of the ancient Egyptians, in which pictorial symbols stand for objects and ideas associated with them.

ll. 273-82. *But ever and anon* .... *swart*. Keats thinks that the patterns of light formed on muffling clouds by the sun shining through circles, arcs and broad-belting coloure were carefully studied by the astronomers of ancient Egypt, and that it is their observations that are preserved in monuments as sacred picture-writing or hieroglyphs.

l. 282. *marble swart,* an allusion to the Rosetta Stone, which is a piece of black basalt, and contains part of three equivalent inscriptions, the first or highest in hieroglyphics, the second in demotic characters, and the third in Greek. The stone is famous as having furnished to Young and Champollion the first key for the interpretation of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Discovered by one of Napoleon's officers 1799 and acquired by Great Britain in 1801, the stone reached the British Museum in 1802 and Keats is drawing here, as he does later too in Book II, 31,—from his memories of the Egyptian collection in the British Museum—particularly, of the accessions of January 1818.

l. 283. *this orb, 'the* planet orb of fire,'—the sun.

l. 287. *outspreaded,* an unusual form of the past tense.

l. 288. *maintain'd eclipse,* remained hidden below the horizon.

l. 289. *awaiting for,* modern English is *waiting for;* this is Shakespearean.

l. 290. *took,* a common poetic substitute for 'taken'.

l. 298. *the dusk demesnes of night,* the twilight fringe of the dark domains ruled by night; see line 303.

ll. 300-1. *by hard compulsion .... time,* had to bow down to the inexorable order of nature, though he felt it like a humiliation,—'the sorrow of the time'. Though the porches opened wide on the borders of night he dared not leap above the horizon. In *bend* and *bent* we have again the Miltonic turn.

l. 302. *rack,* a drifting mass of clouds.

l. 307. *Cœlus,* the father of Hyperion, Saturn and other Titans.

l. 309. *earth-born and sky-engendered,* born of Cœlus and Tellus.

l. 310. *Son of mysteries,* the phrase befits the sun who is the source of all life,—and as the Greeks held, of all knowledge and all arts. The sun-god was looked upon as the leader of the Muses, as the god of music, poetry and healing, as a mighty protector from evil, all-seeing, and hence, as the master of prophecy.

ll. 311-12. *to the powers .... creating,* to his parents, *whose joys,* the joys of Hyperion.

l. 313. Though the inversions are Miltonic it is the romantic lover of sweet sensations, Keats, that speaks in this line.

l. 315. *what shapes they be*, i.e., I wonder at the myriad forms of life and beauty that are born of the sun's radiant energy. The grammatical construction 'what shapes they be', is Greek and comes through Milton.

l. 326. *wox*, old strong preterite form of *wax* (O. E. *weaxan*; past tense sing, *weox*). The form *wox* is common in Spenser.

l. 330. *sad*, serious, grave.

ll. 339-40. *and canst oppose .... presence*, you can face each hour of adversity with the calm self-possession and consciousness of strength, which are yours by reason of being a god, an etherial power.

ll. 343-44. *Be thou .... circumstance*, do not wait upon events to shape your destiny, but bend and change them to your will by anticipating them and by timely action.

ll. 344-5. *seize the arrow's .... murmur*, a striking metaphor, but how is it physically possible? By the time you have run up to the archer to seize the barb of the arrow he will have shot it!

l. 349. *region-whisper*, whisper that filled the heavens or the upper air; Shakespeare uses *region* often in this sense, but it is now obsolete; *region*, 'space occupied by a thing,' used attributively in *region-whisper* (*O. E. D.*).

BOOK II

l. 4. *Cybele*, Ops, the wife of Saturn, and Queen of the Titans.

l. 7. *solid*, combined, and thunderous in volume.

l. 9. *uncertain where*, a Miltonic idiom; cf. *Paradise Lost*, iii, 75, 76:—

> Firm land imbosom'd without Firmament.
> Uncertain which, in Ocean or in Air.

ll. 7-14. Here we have a poetic transfiguration of some of the picturesque scenery which Keats had seen during his Scottish tour and described in his letters to his brother Tom and his friend, Bailey.

ll. 15-17. A reminiscence of Milton's description of the

'burning marl' of hell, sublimed with mineral fury, with a signed bottom all involved with stench and smoke ; See *Paradise Lost*, 227-37.

l. 17. *stubborn'd* rendered hard and pointed.

ll. 19-20. Gyges, Briarëus and Cottus were not Titans, but Giants, whom Keats, like Edward Davies, the author of *Celtic Researches*, mixes up with the Titans. The Giants (Gigantes) sprang from the blood that fell from Uranus upon the earth. They attacked heaven armed with rocks and trunks of trees ; but the gods destroyed them all, and buried them under Aetna. *Briarëus* (*called also Aegaeon*) was a monster with hundred arms, who, according to some legends, attacked Olympus. *Dolor* an abstract noun which Keats found in a book he had with him (entitled *Auctores Mythographi Latini*, by Hyginus) and used as a name of one of the Titans. As Dr. de Sélincourt points out, in Hyginus the following words occur : "ex Aethere et Terra, Dolor, Dolus, Ira," etc.—the names of the Titans following *two* lines later.

l. 28. *gurge*, whirlpool.

l. 29. *Mnemosyne*, (the Greek word means 'memory')—The Greeks looked upon the goddess of memory as the mother of the Muses.

l. 30. *Phœbe*, daughter of Uranus and Gæa (i.e., Coelus and Tellus), who was grandmother of Artemis or Phœbe, the goddess of the moon, Keats identifies her with the moon-goddess Phœbe, either intentionally, or "through being misled by the passage in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (Sandys), ii. 9, 10 :

> No titan yet the world with light adornes
> Nor waxing Phœbe, fills her wained homes

into thinking that the moon Phoebe was a Titan."—*de Sélincourt.*

ll. 34-35. *like a dismal .... moor.* A poetic elaboration of the description Keats had given his brother, Tom, of the Druid Stones outside Keswick, he saw during the Scottish tour : 'We set forth about a mile and a half on the Penrith road, to see the Druid temple....those aged stones on a gentle rise in the midst of the mountains, which at that time darkened all around, except at the fresh opening of the Vale of St. John.'

l. 37. *their chancel vault.* The Druid stones are imagined

as being in a great cathedral with the sky for its vault; the chancel is that part of the Christian church, in which the choir and the clergy sit, and at the upper extremity of which the altar stands.

l 39. *kept shroud*, remained veiled; the phrase is Keats' own coinage.

l. 44. *Iapetus*, Titan, father of Prometheus, Epimetheus, Atlas and Menœtius: His wife was Asia, who appears in line 53.

l. 45. *plashy*, marked with 'plashes' i.e.. splashes of colour; this a Keatsian use of the word.

l. 47. *and because*, and *this* because.

l. 52. *at horrid working*, working, *i.e.* rolling horribly.

l. 53. *Asia*, in Hesiod is generally identified with Clymene; but in Keats they appear as two different persons. In Greek myth Asia is the daughter of Oceanus and Tethys, the mother by Iapetus of Prometheus, Epimetheus and Atlas.

Caf. is not one of the Titans in Greek mythology. Keats remembered the mountain mentioned in Beckford's *Vathek*, which was supposed to surround the earth, and used it as the name of a Titan; the name might also, as de Sélincourt suggests, have come from the *Arabian Nights*.

l. 61. *Hope upon her anchor*, cf. *Faerie Queene*, i. 10. 14: Upon her arms a silver anchor lay whereupon she leaned over as befell.

l. 64. *all prostrate else*, a Miltonic parenthesis, like 'though feminine' in l. 55.

l. 65. *shelve*, verb used as a substantive.

l. 66. *Shadow'd*, overshadowed; Enceladus cast on her not only his physical shadow, but also the shadow of his wrath.

Enceladus, the son of Tartarus and Gæa, and one of the hundred-armed Giants who made war upon the gods. He was killed by Zeus, who buried him under Aetha.

l. 70. *that second war* which was waged by the Giants against the younger gods after the Titans had fallen.

l. 73. *Atlas*, see note on Iapetus.

l. 74. *Gorgons*, daughter of Phorcys (Phorcus in the poem) and Ceto dwelling in the Western Ocean, near night and Hesperides. Their names are Stheno, Euryale and Medusa. Girded

with serpents, they had wings, enormous claws and enormous teeth.

l. 75. *Tethys*, wife of Oceanus.

l. 77. *Ops*, the Cybele of line 4.

l. 79. *No shape distinguishable*, Cf. *Paradise Lost* iii. 668-8 :

> If shape it could be called which shape had none
> Distinguishable in number, joint or form.

l. 93. *frailty*, a trisyllable. The human frailty of passions had come upon Saturn ; he is now a creature of circumstance and passions, not a master thereof—Fate having 'poured a mortal oil upon his head.'

ll. 94-5. Critics cite *Paradise Lost*, iv. lines 114-15, which describe the conflict of passions in Satan :

> each passion dimm'd his face
> Thrice change'd with pale ire, envie and despair.

l. 97. *mortal oil*, oil that had the effect of turning him into a mortal.

l. 98. *A disanointing poison*, poison that deprived him of his sovereignty and godly attributes.

l. 99. *kept her still*, kept *herself* still ; we should say now, *kept-still*.

l. 101. *nighing*, nearing ; this use is now rare.

l. 104. *are sick .... bruise*, are stricken by the same calamity.

l. 107. *Enceladus*, "The strongest and fiercest of the giants, usually indentified with Typhon. Keats makes them two persons, but he attributes to Enceladus (in lines 304-332) the prowess associated in Ovid with the name of Typhon ; cf. Sandys Ovid, *Met*. vi., Snceladus does not occur in Hesiod, but was known to Keats from a passage in Vergil's *Aeneid*, iii. 578."—*de Selincourt*.

l. 120. *utterless*, unutterable.

l. 128. *dinn'd air*, air that had been struck into a wild din (by the shouts of the other Titans) ; *dinn'd* transitive verb.

l. 133. *spirit-leaved book*, book containing all the mystery of knowledge—namely, the sky.

l. 334. *Uranus*, the same as Coelus.

l. 135. *Sav'd ..... gloom*, recovered from Night and Chaos.

l. 136. *the waves*, i.e. of darkness.

l. 146. *a quadruple wrath*, the wrath of earth, water, air and fire.

l. 153. *palpable*, having form, and substance, as distinguished from the formless chaos which they replaced.

l. 158. *What can I*, what can I say? The verb of saying omitted, as in 'Thus brief' in Bk. I. 153. So does Milton often.

l. 159. *unseen parent dear*, Coelus.

l. 161. *engine*, make operative; translate into action.

l. 163. *Oceanus*, god of the water which was believed to surround the earth and husband of Tethys. "The one Titan, according to ancient authority, who had not joined in war against the Olympians. His peaceful acquiescence in his fate made him to Keats the mouthpiece of the eternal truth of which the poem is the expression"—*de Sélincourt.*

astonied, astonished; we have this form of the word in *Job*, xvii. 8 and *Paradise Lost* ix. 890.

l. 168. *Sophist*, a philosopher; not used here in its usual depreciatory sense; *sage*, like Hopportades in Lycidas.

no Athenian grove, like the *Akademea* in Athens, where Plato and his pupils held philosophical conferences; In *Paradise Regained* iv. we have:

> See there the olive-grove of Academe,
> Plato's retirement ...

l. 170. *locks not oozy*, Cf. *Lycidas*: With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves.

l. 172. *far-foamed sands*, a fine picture of the endless stretches of sandy beach lined with foam.

l. 183. *sifted ..... atom-universe*, you have analysed and studied the constitution of the material universe.

l. 186. *One avenue ... eyes*, one source of illumination, i.e. wisdom was cut off from you.

ll. 295-6. *and light ... producer*, Light born of chaos, b[illegible] to brood upon chaos, and created, by so brooding, the l[illegible]g forms of nature.

ll. 203-5. *for to bear .... sovereignty*. The highest does not come of physical might, but from a clear-eyed vision of the truths and laws of the universe, however grim and forbidding they may be. Wisdom faces all truths, and compre-

hends the vast frame of things with an unperturbed courage; *all calm*, all calmly.

l. 207. *though once chiefs*, though Chaos and Darkness once reigned over all. Heaven and Earth succeeded them; these gave place to the Titans, who in their turn had to be succeeded by the younger gods.

ll. 211-13. The central thought of the poem; they go with lines 203-5 and line 229.

l. 223. *wherewithal*, used in the double sense of 'with which' and 'wherever it will.'

l. 230. *the young God of the Seas*, Neptune.

l. 234. *foam'd along*, driven forward in foaming waves; the Oxford English Dictionary notes no other transitive use of this verb; *to foam*, "to draw (a chariot) *along* with the accompaniment of foam" (*O. E.D.*).

l. 238. *to bid sad farewell*, an echo of Wolsey's 'Farewell! a long farewell, to all my greatness!' in *Henry VIII*.

l. 244. *poz'ed*, settled; a nonce-use of the word. The O.E.D. does not give this meaning.

l. 247. *what deepest .... tell*? The conclusion of the sentence with the principal clause is in Milton's manner.

l. 256. *bode of*, anticipate; speak of coming evil; the only instance in which *bode* is followed by '*of*'.

ll. 257-58. *if I thought .... Gods*, I would not talk of any coming catastrophe if I thought that any words of a feeble woman like myself could have the effect of standing in the way of any help that is likely to come from the most powerful among the band of Titans. Her words, she means, cannot have the effect of detering the leaders from energetic action.

l. 263, *clime*, air.

mouthed shell, like 'the wreathed horn' of Triton.

l. 318. *a youngling arm*, that of Jupiter.

l. 321. *Spleens*, anger.

l. 324. *wide glaring etc.*, suggests Moloch's 'which if not victory, is yet revenge' (*Paradise Lost* II. 105).

l. 328. *ether*, the upper air.

l. 329. *the crooked stings of fire*, lightning.

l. 331. *that puny essence,* Jove, surrounded by clouds that magnify his real strength.

l. 334. *much pain. . . .realms,* what pains me more than loss of realms is the passing away of the days of peace.

l. 340. *else but solemn sounds,* sounds, other than the solemn sounds summoning us to war..

l. 355. *into midnight cove,* into a dark cove ; or into a cove at midnight.

l. 356. *silver silence,* silent in the silver radiance heralding sunrise—the arrival of Hyperion.

l. 359. *All the sad spaces of oblivion,* all inaccessible heights and spaces that had been enveloped by darkness ; all spaces lost to view and memory. Keats paraphrases line 365 : Mantled before in darkness and huge shade.

l. 362. *tormented,* broken into cataracts and foam.

l. 366. *made it terrible,* they made the light terrible because they, the beetling steeps, the sullen depths, and the tormented streams, presented an awe-inspiring scene. The light was rendered terrible by the plight of the Titans too ; see lines 369, 370.

l. 370. *of itself,* of misery : His brilliance revealed to the fallen gods their most hateful condition.

l. 371. *Numidian curl,* short curls, like the frizzed hair of African tribes.

l. 374. *Memnon's image,* A statue at Thebes of Amenhotep III, who was called Memnon by the Greeks, after Mem-Ethiopians and an ally of Priam in the Trojan war. From the non of the *Iliad,* son of Tithonus and Eos, who was king of the statue musical strains are said to have proceeded when the first rays of the sun fell upon it.

l 375 *dusking East,* at sundown it is the light of the eastern sky that fades first.

l. 377. *contemplative,* contemplatively, refers to Hyperion and not to his hands.

To the most .... itself, a contorted phrase ; " a line which I think one may safely say would have been better omitted "—*Ridley.*

BOOK III

l. 2. *amazed*, bewildered.

l. 9. *bewildered*, transferred epithet ; it is the wanderers that are bewildered.

l. 10. *Delphic harp*, the harp of Apollo ; Delphi, a town in Northern Greece, was the seat of a world-renowned oracle of Pythian Apollo. *Touch piously the Delphic harp*, a poetic way of saying : 'Begin, with due piety, to sang of Apollo', the theme of Book III. It was not however the harp, but the lyre that was sacred to Apollo, who, as the God of music, was known as *Apollo Citharaedus*.

l. 12. *the Dorian flute*, flute played on in the solemn Dorian 'mode.' The authentic modes of Greek music were the Dorian, Lydian, and Phrygian. The Dorian was bold and grave, while the Lydian was soft and effeminate. Plato calls the Dorian the 'true Hellenic mode' and the strain of courage. It inspires a moderate and settled temper in the listener, says Aristotle (*Politics* VIII, 5).

l. 13. *Father of all verse*, Apollo, the sovereign of the Muses (Apollo Musegetes).

ll. 18-19. *the red wine .... well*, "the beaker full of the warm south, with beaded bubbles winking at the brim", as the reader will say, recalling *The Ode to a Nightingale*.

l. 19. *faint-lipp'd*, shells with delicately tinted edges or mouth, if they are 'mouthed shells'.

ll. 23-24. *Cylades, Delos*, Delos, the island in the Aegian where Apollo was born, is encircled by islands which hence were called Cyclades.

l. 30. *Giant of the sun*, Hyperion,

l. 31. *mother fair*, Leto or Latona.

l. 32. *twin-sister*, Artemis or Diana.

l. 43. *the golden bow*, like the laurel, the lyre, and the serpent, the bow and arrows are Apollo's attributes.

l. 55. *cool mid-forest*, Cf. 'the cool mid-forest brake' in the exordium to *Endymion* ; it was a spot Keats loved to dream of.

l. 61. *the supreme shape*, being the mother of all the Muses,

Mnemosyne is a goddess of power and majesty ; she has already, in line 46, been described as an 'awful Goddess'.

l. 66. *Listen'd in pain*, in pain because of the yearnings it roused in the souls of listeners.

l. 76. *Power*, deity.

l. 80. *gloomless*, beaming with a new realization.

l. 86. *dark, dark*, a reminiscence of 'O dark dark, dark, amid the blaze of noon'.—*Samson Agonistes.*

l. 87. *painful .... eyes*, it seals his eyes because he wishes to recapture experiences and thoughts that are yet dim in his mind.

l. 92. *liegeless air*, air that knows no liege-lord or master.

ll. 92-3 *when ..... aspirant*?, when the defiant and masterful air lets me sink down even as I strive to ascend ? Why should the air pull me down when it should buoy me up ?

l. 98. *the most patient brilliance .... moon*, moon shining with still and soft light.

l. 114. *gray legends*, hoary legends that have come down from time immemorial.

ll. 114-17. Keats symbolically sums up in these lines the themes of all poetry.

ll. 127-30. *liker still .... death ; .... life*, more like one who is experiencing a struggle which ends in his shaking off the relentless and undying grip of death, and becoming immortal.

l. 128. *immortal death* a striking oxymoron. Margaret Robertson quotes Swinburne's *Garden to Proserpine*, st. 7 :

> Who gathers all things mortal
> With cold immortal hands.

l. 136. In a transcript of Hyperion appears the following completion of the line, in pencil, by Woodhouse—

> Glory dawn'd, he was a god.

CRITICAL EXTRACTS

(OLIVER ELTON)

Hyperion was written along with the tales and odes, and though unfinished is greater than they. It is a length of epic or mythic frieze abandoned, re-wrought, and again abandoned; in either of its forms, perhaps, inherently incapable of being finished or even continued. It is the poem that was to atone, and does atone for the imperfections of *Endymion*. It was to be great and heroic and pathetic, with the heroism and pathos of defeated deities; and like *Paradise Lost* where the fallen spirits regard thmeselves as god-like. Milton here guards the way; he saves Keats from treating the tales of the Greek theogony in the style of Chapman and the Jacobeans; he lends a model for the verse and language, and for the epical cast generally. This influence strikes deep far beyond the use of those 'inversions' whose frequency according to Keats induced him to drop the work; and it has been traced about by scholars. But in fact Keats follows Milton too little rather than too much; for after a long and splendid triumph his style begins to waver, and in spite of many glorious recoveries it does not keep up. The spell of the Jacobeans reasserts itself; the obsolete participial epithets ('the rustled air.' the ridge 'stubborn'd with iron', and 'Enceladus tiger-passion'd,' are examples) thicken, and the poet often falls into a bad rut of language—neither Miltonic nor Jacobean, but something bad of his own. He does not forge a diction that is fitted for the long wear and tear, the time-and-wind-defying fabric, of an epic poem—even such a short epic, on the scale of *Paradise Regained* as *Hyperion* would probably have been. This is only to say that Keats was

twenty-four and that he was trying to do what Milton did when he was fifty. Yet he has come nearer to Milton, not only when he is following Milton, but when he is himself—than any one else; nearer than Shelley or Landor. The opening three hundred lines of the First Book down to the speech of Cœlus are in a great, original, and sustained style, full of memories of Milton, but by no means too Miltonic. The actual march is often more like Shakespeare's in his Histories, the lines being separately spun rather than interlaced, but not repelling one another or left in isolation; they are accumulated, and the figure of enumeration is favoured by the poet:

> But it is so; and I am smother'd up
> And buried from all godlike exercise
> Of influence benign on planets pale,
> Of admonitions to the winds and seas
> Of peaceful sway above men's harvesting,
> And all those acts which Deity supreme
> Doth ease its heart of love in.

What Keats has learnt, since he wrote *Endymion* is to balance his decasyllabic line internally—one of the last secrets of the craft. In this passage the fifth line, 'Of peaceful sway', is not perfectly balanced; the first half weighs down the second, owing to the weak last foot. The beginning is very light in this one:

> As when, upon a trancéd summer night.

In Thomson's

> Come, gentle Spring! ethereal mildness come!

the balance is there, but it is mechanical. But it is perfect in Milton's line

> Hail, holy Light, offspring of Heaven first born!

and in Keats' line

> Of influence benign on planets pale

and in each line of the epic simile in the revised *Hyperion*:

> When in mid-day the sickening east wind
> Shifts sudden to the south, the small warm rain
> Melts out the frozen incense from all flowers,
> And fills the air with so much pleasant health
> That even the dying man forgets his shroud;
> Even so........

In this passage (and Keats wrote none nobler), there is also freedom, and not only balance; the lines overrun, but not, as they once did, to the obscuration of the metre; and the sweetness and gravity of the whole comparison—a brief poem in itself—are beyond praise. The dialogue of Titans in the Second Book of *Hyperion* culminates in the symbolic speech of Oceanus, which is another of Keats's triumphs, although it embarrasses the story; and a certain flagging at the end of this book is redeemed in the Third; where the scene changes from gloom and discouragement to the summons of Apollo by Mnemosyne; a contrast like that in the third book of *Paradise Lost*. But it breaks off in the middle of a phrase. Why did not Keats go on? The question is more than curious, for it takes us in the heart of the poem, though the answer must be guess-work. The publisher stated that Keats was 'discouraged' by the reception of *Endymion*; but this was contradicted by Keats himself. The excess of 'Miltonic inversions' can hardly be the reason; they are not so many and could have been retrenched. When Keats took up the work again, it was not to continue but to remould it; it was therefore not illness or conscious failure of power that told upon him. There was an obstacle in the subject, and, as a living poet has observed, 'it is plain that the story was strangling itself.'

The subject, which is never reached, is the dethonement of Hyperion, last of the Titans, by the young Apollo, greater than he in might and melody. We are shown the decay of Saturn, the other fallen Titans, and the despondency of Hyperion, and the call to Apollo. So far the story; but meantime it has become a symbol; Oceanus tells his fellow sufferers that their fate accords with the eternal law by which every dynasty gives way to a better, fairer and stronger one: 'so on our heels a fresh perfection treads.' This is the utterance of Keats's faith, or hope that there is an eternal progress in the world. But Hyperion has to fade and disappear, under this very law. The poet was thus in a dilemma, into which he may have been led by Milton, in which Milton was himself partly entangled, but from which Keats had not Milton's ostensible way of escape. He may have preferred to stop rather than to plunge further.

We all know how Milton puts our sympathies on what is

officially, the wrong side. They are with Satan, not with God, and they are only in part transferred from Satan to Adam and Eve. We may say, as we please, either that God is too great to be realized in poetry, or that Milton's God is uninteresting; the effect is the same. All through, Milton keeps falling back on theology, and on the importance to mankind of the event, in order to take the sting out of our interest in Satan. He manages to interest us in the event by humanising Adam and Eve, but this does not move us as the humanising of the fallen angels moves us. At the last he falls back on splendour and pageant, in the visions shown by Michael, in order to hide the decline of the interest. And he can always fall back on the belief of his readers in the story, when the poetic interest flags. The repetition of these points may be excused for their bearing on *Hyperion*.

Here, too, according to a story once believed, a race anciently established in heaven is cast out by one nobler. The Titans, of course were not sullen servants like the angels, but were the *Ancien Régime* itself; of a rougher, more sombre make than their dispossessors. Still, as in Milton, our sympathy is enlisted with the fallen, not with the victors. This interest, however, which in Milton's poem is both heroic and pathetic, in Keats's poem is much more pathetic than heroic, for the Titans can fight no longer. Hyperion himself is to fall, and might have fought, but there would have been difficulties in the foregone conclusion of a Homeric combat with Apollo. There is, in fact, no epic subject, such as Milton's story offered. There is therefore nothing in prospect which can increase our real interest in the Titans; nor is there any extrinsic interest, such as Milton possessed in his theology to make this want good; nor can the interest be transferred to Apollo without Hyperion losing it. There remains only the symbolism; but this again is adverse to our caring much for Hyperion, who exists only to be outshone. Nor does the symbolism work out well, for no one believes that Zeus is really *better* than Saturn. Indeed Hyperion and Apollo, as Pope says of 'most women', have 'no character at all,' but are god-like decorative figures. It is hard indeed to see how Keats could have gone on.

Yet this failure to go on hardly mars the success of what he

did. From the first his achievement of epic majesty and style, and of a new heroic verse, were acknowledged; not only by Shelley, but by the sharp-eyed patronage of Jeffrey and the noisy spleen of Byron.

Hyperion shows that Keats might have made a great epic poem, had he lived longer and had he found a subject. He has the instinct for composition, the poetic oratory, the words, the music. Of no other English poet since Milton can this be so surmised.

* * *

MACKAIL ON DANTESQUE INFLUENCE ON HYPERION

When we pass from the Odes to *Hyperion*, here too we see poetry in the act of growth, and now the growth is so rapid that the execution could not keep pace with it. Keats dropped it ; took it up again—the one instance in which he did such a thing—and began, with dying hands, to remodel it ; and left it, a superb and wonderful fragment, like the Transfiguration left half-painted on the easel of Raffæle. The distance between it and *Endymion*, when we remember that there are only thirteen or fourteen months of time between them, is incredible. Let us take one concrete instance, which will serve as well as another for an illustration, and set beside one another two passages from the two poems which deal with the same motive of stillness. First, that from Book I of *Endymion* :

"And as a willow keeps
A patient watch over the stream that creeps
Windingly by it, so the quiet maid
Held her in peace ; so that a whispering blade
Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling
Down in the bluebells, or a wren light rustling
Among sere leaves and twigs, might all be heard."

Now, that from the beginning of *Hyperion* :

"No stir of air was there,
Not so much life as on a summer's day

Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest.
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
By reason of his fallen divinity
Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips."

Between these two passages, each perfect of its kind, poetry in Keats has undergone an enormous expansion. It has become at once larger and deeper. This immense growth in range and power had all been made in the year's interval.

.... We know that Cary's Dante was the one book that Keats took with him on his Scottish tour in the summer of 1818.

.... Cary's Dante is not only Dante imperfectly given (as all translations of poetry must be), but Dante, one might say, a little Miltonised: and the result is that the Dantesque influence in *Hyperion*—which also I think exists, though it is less clearly traceable, in others of Keats' poem of that year—was mixed up with, and has not been discriminated from, the Miltonic influence itself, which is so patent, and which was so powerful that Keats himself rebelled against it and deliberately resolved to break away from it.

This Dantesque influence is strongest in Book I of *Hyperion*. The whole *mise-en-scène* there has clear traces of Dante's Inferno—the City of Dis, the Centaurs, Malebolge, the Giant-rimmed embankment between the eighth and ninth circles. But the influence is not only general, it is now and then specific; there are at least a dozen passages where it may be clearly discerned in points of substance and style.

A few may be named as instances. When Keats makes Oceanus say to Hyperion,

"Seize the arrow's barb,
Before the tense string murmur,"

there is a reminiscence, hardly uncertain, of Virgil's words to Dante:

"Disse: Scocca
L'arco del dir, che infino al ferro hai tratto."

Or take these lines :

"By her in stature the tall Amazon
Had stood a pigmy's height : she would have ta'en
Achilles by the hair and bent his neck."

That is exactly Dante's manner of pictorial exemplification, and his manner of using the classical mythology for imaginative purposes. Or again, take this passage :

"She went
With backward footing through the shade a space :
He follow'd and she turn'd to lead the way
Through aged boughs, that yielded like the mist
Which eagles cleave upmounting from their nest."

That is Dante's manner of visualisation, reinforced by a characteristically Dantesque simile. Only two poets have written in just this manner ; and they are Dante and Keats.

Here too we may again clearly recognise the Dantesque simile :

"As with us mortal men, the laden heart
Is persecuted more, and fever'd more,
When it is nighing to the mournful house
Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise ;
So Saturn. . . ."

Another instance of striking affinity, combined with and partly due to actual suggestion, occurs at the beginning of Book II of *Hyperion*, in the description of Saturn's arrival at the "sad place" (this phrase itself is Dante's and is very characteristic of him), when the fallen Titans are huddled together :

"Where their own groans
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where :
Crag jutting forth to crag."

This cannot fail to remind us of the description of the central charm in the last canto of the *Inferno* :

"Che non per vista, ma per suono è noto
D'un ruscelletto, che quivi discende

Per la buca d'un sasso, ch' egli ha roso
Col corso ch' egli avvolge : e poco pende."

Even in single lines there is now and then an accent, new in Keats, but in no way Miltonic, indeed essentially un-Miltonic, which bears the closest affinity to Dante's. Take lines like these :

"There was a listening fear in her regard."
"To the level of his ear
"Leaning with parted lips."
"While still the dazzling globe maintained eclipse."
"And plunged all noiseless into the deep night."

The manner is so exactly Dantes's that one finds one's self as it were involuntarily trying to remember what the Italian of them is. It is a more intimate and subtler link between Keats and Dante than that which the Miltonic inversions and Latinisms of *Hyperion* create between Keats and Milton. For that is a likeness of manner, and sometimes only of mannerisms; this is something deeper, a likeness of mind. The two poets have a subtle kinship in manner of visualisation, in evolution of thought and in use of ornament; but also, and even more vitally, in the way in which their imagination works. The resemblance is not imitative; it comes naturally and unconsciously from a spiritual affinity; from a singular height and outlook having been reached on the mountain of poetry.

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